

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY;

Instituted 1799.

**SOLD AT THE DEPOSITORY, 56, PATERNOSTER ROW,
AND 65, ST. PETER'S CHURCHYARD;**

AND BY THE BOOK-SELLERS.



INTERIOR OF THE HOUSE OF A WEALTHY CHINESE

THE
PEOPLE OF CHINA.

THEIR
HISTORY, COURT, RELIGION, GOVERNMENT, LEGISLA
TION, INSTITUTIONS, TRIBUNALS, AGRICULTURE,
LANGUAGE, LITERATURE, MANUFACTURES,
ARTS, SCIENCES, MANNERS AND
CUSTOMS

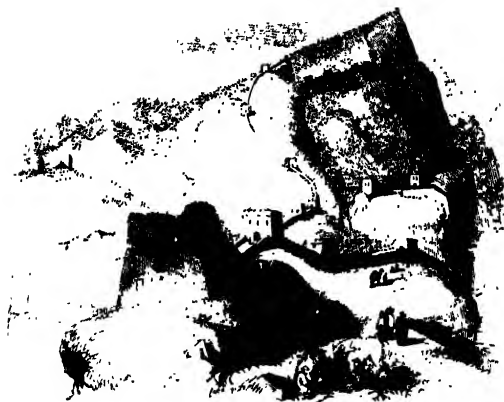
WHICH IS ADDED,
A SKETCH OF PROTESTANT MISSIONS.

LONDON:
THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY;
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THE PEOPLE OF CHINA.

CHAPTER I.

A SUMMARY OF CHINESE HISTORY



THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA

THE history of all nations, except the Jews, commences with fabulous and mythological traditions. This is the characteristic of the annals of Egypt, Greece, and Rome, whose sun of power has long since sunk below the horizon, never more to resume its ancient splendour; and, it may be

added with peculiar emphasis of China: national vanity, and the love of the marvellous, have induced the Chinese annalists to assign to their country such a high degree of antiquity as exceeds the bounds of belief. Even one of their own commentators, named Choo-foo-tse, remarks—“It is impossible to credit the accounts of these remote ages.”

The fabulous part of Chinese history commences with Puon-koo, who is said to have been followed by a number of persons with fanciful names, who reigned for thousands of years. Among these were Fo-hy, to whom the invention of the arts of music, numbers, etc., is ascribed; Shin-noong, who instructed his people in agriculture; and Hoang-ty, who divided all the lands into groups of nine equal squares, and invented the mode of noting the cycle of sixty years, which is the foundation of the Chinese system of chronology. In the Chinese annals, Fo-hy, Shin-noong, and Hoang-ty, are denominated the “Three Emperors;” and they are the reputed inventors of all the arts and accommodations of life.

To the “Three Emperors” succeeded the “Five Sovereigns,” of whom Yaou and Shun were the last and the most celebrated of all Chinese rulers. It was from the reign of Yaou, who is described as living at about the period of the deluge, that the pages of Chinese history begin to assume somewhat of the appearance of probability, although to the age of Confucius, B. C. 550, they are still sullied with fable and uncertainty.

Yaou is represented as a model of perfection,

virtue, and wisdom ; his reign as a state of innocence ; and the country which he governed as a perfect paradise. The aged and the young, the rich and the poor, alike hailed him as their benefactor, and delighted to recount his praises.

In the "Shoo-king" of Confucius, there is an account of an extensive flooding which took place in the reign of Yaou,* and which appears to be derived from a tradition concerning the Mosaic deluge. It reads thus:—"The emperor Yaou said, 'Vast and destructive are the accumulating waters. They have overflowed their banks, covered the hill, overtopped the loftiest mountains, and are co-extensive with the spacious concave of heaven. Who shall save the people from the calamity?'"

Although it is evident that a flood so vast must have destroyed "all flesh," yet the Chinese historians, having only tradition for their guide, represent Yaou, and his successors, Shun and Yu, as being employed in drawing off the waters of the great inundation. According to their testimony it was effected by Yu ; for which reason he was chosen by Shun to be his partner on the throne, and finally his successor. Yu is more celebrated for being the founder of the period, or the dynasty called Hea, which commenced, according to the erroneous chronology of the Chinese, B.C. 2207.

FROM THE HEA TO THE HAN DYNASTY.

When Yu assumed the reins of empire he was ninety-three years of age. He is said to have

* According to Chinese chronology, this took place B.C. 2291, which is only fifty-seven years later than the generally received date of the deluge of Moses.

reigned seven years ; and, according to Confucius, with consummate wisdom. With him, indeed, he represents the perfection of princes to have ended. After the reign of Yu, the monarchy became hereditary ; and fourteen princes, descended from one Ta-yu, sat upon the throne during four centuries, concerning whom nothing is recorded worthy of note. During that period, *it is represented that China was divided amongst a number of feudal chiefs, who either acknowledged the emperor's power, or set him at defiance, according as he was in a condition to exercise authority.* There was constant strife between them ; and philosophy vainly endeavoured to unite the whole empire under one head. The reign of the Hea, therefore, was inglorious ; and it closed with the vicious Keë, who was dethroned by Ching-tang, who became the founder of the Shang dynasty, B.C. 1766.

THE SHANG DYNASTY.

Ching-tang justified his usurpation by a solemn appeal to Shang-te, the Supreme Emperor, or Supreme Being, whence it became, in the sight of the Chinese, the will of Heaven ; and he was permitted to sit upon the throne by universal consent. Nor do his after actions exhibit unfitness for empire. *He was anxious to recall the age of Yaou, Shun, and Yu, and he laboured diligently to improve the condition and the manners of his people.*

It is related, that Ching-tang, on ascending the throne, laid up a large store of grain ; and that a famine, occasioned by drought, happening soon afterwards, he was enabled thereby to act in a

bountiful manner towards his subjects. On this account, he is said to have charged himself with the sins which had occasioned the calamity, and by humble confession so to have propitiated the Deity, that plentiful showers fell upon the parched soil, and the wrath of Heaven was appeased. By this conduct, Ching-tang established himself on the throne; and Chinese emperors, from that day to this, have not failed to follow his example. They affect a show of piety to ensure the obedience of their subjects.

The records of the Shang dynasty are very meagre. Twenty-seven princes of the same family seem successively to have occupied the throne within the space of 643 years, but their lives are, for the most part, a mere blank. Of Tae-keä, the successor of Ching-tang, it is said, that he forfeited his claim to the crown by a disorderly life; of Tae-woo, that he was humane to his people in general, but severe against the mandarins; and of Pwan-käng, that he made a desperate effort to suppress the aristocracy, by whom the people were in his reign borne down and impoverished. After Pwan-käng, the authority of the Shang dynasty became more and more slighted; whilst the princes of Chow, by their statesman-like wisdom, became popular, and drew multitudes to their capital.

Such was the state of China about B.C. 1352. Thirty years after, during the reign of Woo-ting, some prosperity was enjoyed by the country, but it ceased at his death. During the tyrannical government of Kang-tsoo, Keä-tsoo, Lin-sin, Kang-ting, and Woo-yih, who oppressed the country for seventy years, a rapid decline of the

reigning dynasty was visible. Numbers of their subjects sought a refuge from their tyranny in the neighbouring isles, and it seems probable that Japan received its first Chinese colonists from them.

The succeeding monarchs of the Shang dynasty chose the popular princes of Chow for their prime ministers, and their ruin thereby was sealed. In the reign of Chow-sin the people called upon Woo-wong, a son of the prime minister, to depose their king on account of his tyranny and cruelty; and when he saw that, he arrayed himself in his royal robes, and retiring to his palace, set fire to it, and perished in the flames, B.C. 1122.

THE CHOW DYNASTY.

The period of authentic Chinese history may be considered as dating from the race of Chow, that is, about 1000 years B.C. Before that time the Chinese had no existing records. While this race sat upon the throne, however, Confucius appeared, and he it was, together with his disciples, who bequeathed to the world various books which relate the early traditions of the country and the annals of their own times. This fact will prove the truth of a previous statement; namely, that before the age of Confucius, the annals of China are fabulous and uncertain. To an attentive observer, indeed, it appears evident that what Confucius related of the Chinese, in remote ages, had reference for the most part to a distinct people. Thus Yaou, Shun, and Yu, seem to have been nearly contemporaneous with the three patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and the points of re-

semblance in their characters afford evidence that they were one and the self-same persons. Thus, also, Fo-hy is to be identified with Noah. Tradition had handed down its uncertain memorials of these Scripture worthies; and Confucius, whose design was to draw a pattern for the imitation of princes, placed them on the throne of China, and described them as Chinese patriarchs. How prone the Chinese are to imitation, may be seen from the fact that they fabricated a counterpart of Alexander the Great in the person of Tsin-che-hwang-te. But notwithstanding all this, it is clear that the Chinese are, as a nation, the most ancient people in existence—the Jews excepted. Their civilization was coeval with that of the Egyptians; their literature with that of Greece; and the extension of the empire with that of Persia. Confucius himself was nearly contemporary with Herodotus, the father of Grecian history, to whom he is neither inferior in talent nor morality. He was one of those extraordinary men whom the Almighty has in mercy raised up at divers times, to alleviate the miseries of mankind, by teaching them that to be happy they must be virtuous.

According to the testimony of Confucius, the new emperor Woo-wong, which signifies literally, “the martial king,” was without spot or blemish, and a father to his people. His wisdom, however, does not appear to have equalled his goodness. Many feudal states already existed in the country, and he added others by apportioning territories to the well-deserving statesmen and princes who had lost their patrimony. This act, though emanating from a spirit of kindness, increased the

evils, which had long been productive of much bloodshed in the empire. For, although the recipients of his bounty may generally have been attached to the cause of the emperor, yet their descendants, possessed of power, exhibited a spirit of insubordination.

The successor of Woo-wong was named Ching-wang. In his first years of government, this prince was assisted by one of his uncles; but the others leagued with the son of Chow-sin, the last of the Shang dynasty, to subvert the government. This rebellion, however, was suppressed, and the malcontents were removed to a distant province, where they built the city of Lo-yang, and afterwards proved faithful subjects.

Ching-wang appears to have been an energetic prince, and to have obtained considerable celebrity. At the close of his reign, he even had the gratification of receiving tributaries from some southern barbarians, who ascribed to him all the honour and glory of a long course of peace and tranquillity. In the true spirit of oriental hyperbole, they also ascribed to his influence the good harvest and the abundant fruits of the earth; not knowing that from the hand of Jehovah alone, mankind receives these blessings.

During the reign of Ching-wang, coins were first issued in China, in order to prevent the inconvenience of bartering commodities.* He was succeeded by his son, Kang-wang, who, though a good man, did nothing worthy of note. His

* Such is the testimony of Confucius; and if correct, the Chinese must claim the honour of this invention, for Ching-wang lived about 1,100 years B.C., whereas the Æginetans, to whom the "Parian Chronicle" ascribes the origin of coined money, did not issue it till B.C. 895. About the same time, however, the Lydians introduced the art of coining money, and Herodotus gives them the precedence.

successor, Chaou-wang, is represented as employing himself in hunting, whilst numerous rebellious and intestine wars desolated the empire. Chaou-wang was drowned, and his successor perished in an attempt to punish the Tartars who had ravaged the western provinces. After him a number of princes reigned, who were only remarkable for their folly and tyranny. At length, in the reign of Seuen-wang, the government acted with vigour. For the first time the Tartars were routed and attacked in their steppes; but they rallied, and the emperor, leading a new army against them, was defeated, and finally died with grief.

The death of Seuen-wang was followed by years of strife. The tributary princes of Loo, Tse, Chin, Tsou, Tsaou, Yen, and Sung, with other states, usurped the sovereignty, and waged war alike with their equals and the emperor. Whole provinces were laid waste by the Tartars, or rival princes, and the government had not power sufficient to check their ravages.

During the reign of Ting-wang, and about the time when the Grecian olympiads were instituted, Chinese chronology seems to have become more accurate.

Ting-wang commenced his rule about B.C. 770; and while he swayed the sceptre, twenty-one princes raised their principalities into kingdoms, and thereby renounced all allegiance to him. After this, nothing worthy of note is recorded till the reign of Ling-wang, which is rendered famous by the birth of Confucius, in 552 B. C. During the life of Confucius, the various princes aimed fiercely at each other's destruction; and

after his death the strife was prolonged, till the emperors were rendered mere shadows, and the people either lived by war, or died of starvation. At length, the Tsin state having been ruled by a succession of warlike princes, gradually overpowered the others, and a new dynasty was commenced. Chaou-seang, prince of 'Tsin, stripped the last emperor of the Chow race of his imperial dignity, and usurped the throne, B.C. 249.

THE TSIN DYNASTY.

When the Tsin state became supreme in power, a reign of terror commenced in China. Chaou-seang and his successors, Chwang-sčang-wang and Ching-wang, all ruled with an iron rod. The latter monarch, puffed up with inordinate vanity, abolished the humble title of Wang, or "king," which the preceding dynasty had adopted, and called himself Ta-che-liwang-te, or "The first great emperor." He also proclaimed himself a compeer of Yaou, Shun, and Yu. It was this emperor whom the Chinese annals have extolled as a counterpart to Alexander. According to them, during his reign the renown of Chinese valour became as terrible in Asia as that of the Romans in the western world. This is, doubtless, hyperbole; yet it would appear that he made some foreign conquests or incursions, since most of the Asiatic tribes date their knowledge of China from his era. The Huns and Tartar tribes also appear to have been completely subdued by him. He chased them into their deserts; and to protect the country against their future inroads, erected, or

at least completed, the famous great wall of China, which has now stood for 2000 years.

Chin-wang died B.C. 207, and was succeeded by his son, Urh-she-hwang-te, who, intrusting the empire to eunuchs, was deposed by Lew-pang, the captain of a band of robbers, who usurped the throne, and founded a new dynasty, about B.C. 201.

THE HAN DYNASTY.

One of the most celebrated periods of Chinese history commenced with the race of Han. Its founder, Lew-pang, ascended the throne under the name of Kaou-tsoo, and he kept the empire in complete subjection. He died when his son and heir was still a child, whence his wife became regent. Finally, indeed, she became ruler, for the young prince died before the period of his accession to the throne, and she usurped the empire, and reigned under the name of Leu-how. Her reign was one of terror; but her successor, Wan-te, redressed the grievances of his subjects, so that he gained great celebrity.

Wan-te was the first who gave a distinctive name to his reign, which custom has been followed by all succeeding dynasties. His successors were considered great scholars, and munificent patrons of literature. The empire seems to have been swayed by philosophy, but it proved vain to defend it from its old enemies. It was at this period that the Tartars, by their predatory warfare, became the source of endless disquiet to the nation, and neither alliances nor tribute could make them lay down their arms. Even the gift of the emperor's daughters in marriage

with the ruthless chiefs, could not stop their ravages. They came onward still, like a devastating flood.

Among the earlier princes of this race were Woo-te, Seun-te, and Gae-te. All of these appear to have been celebrated for their abilities; and Seun-te was conspicuous for his love of literature. The last year of the reign of Gae-te is described as coeval with our Saviour's birth; yet, unhappily for that multitudinous people, he still remains unknown. The sound of the glad tidings of salvation has yet scarce been heard in that vast empire; but hope points to the day when it will go forth throughout every part. The chain by which the empire has been bound for ages is broken, and, ere long, the disciples of Confucius, Taou, and Budhu, may become the disciples of Christ. The fields of China are opening, and labourers, we trust, will enter them, and gather an abundant harvest.

After the death of Gae-te, his successor, being a minor, Wang-inang, an ambitious and cruel grandee, dethroned the Han family. Various leaders collected forces to assert the rights of that race, and they were successful. Wang-mang was slain, but one of the victorious generals was raised to the throne, under the name of Kwang-woo, A.D. 25, and the line of the Han princes remained still uninterrupted.

The emperors from Kwang-woo downward are called Tung-han. It is said of Ming-te, his successor, that he was prompted, by a dream, to search for the Holy One in the west, as pointed out by Confucius. An embassy was instantly despatched to Hindoostan, and some priests of Budhu accom-

panied them to China. The tenets which these priests taught found an advocate in the emperor's brother, and Buddhism henceforth spread its baneful influence over the minds of the people, and became even more popular than the state religion. This is a remarkable event in Chinese history. Although averse to every thing foreign, and although they looked upon the Hindoos with indescribable contempt, yet they embraced with ardour their gross and debasing system of idolatry; a proof that the human mind, if unenlightened by Divine revelation, readily submits to the most degrading superstitions. Of what importance, then, is the gospel to such a people! It will rescue them from the greatest evils to which a fallen nature is ever prone, and to which the Chinese seem especially exposed.

Ming-te was succeeded by Chang-te, who is celebrated for his victory over the Tartars, and in whose reign literature greatly flourished. After his death, women, eunuchs, and children held the reins of government during successive reigns. Then came the period of the San-Kuo, or "Three States," into which the country was divided towards the close of the Han dynasty, and which forms a favourite subject of the historical plays and romances of the Chinese. Three states long struggled for dominion, and numerous were the exploits which the respective generals of the three leaders performed; but, at length, How-te, the legitimate emperor, abdicated the throne in favour of the prince of Wei, and the Han dynasty was no more. It arose in splendour, but it set behind a cloud of misfortune. Notwithstanding the Chinese consider this period as the most

glorious in their history, and to this day they call themselves *Han-jin*, "Sons, or men of Han;" nor does their opinion and their boast appear to be founded in fallacy. During the epoch of the Han dynasty, China produced some of its most celebrated generals, writers, statesmen, and sages. The empire, also, was extended towards the south and the west, and Chinese civilization was carried to the borders of the Indian archipelago and the foot of the Imaus. Moreover, the learning of the country spread its influence extensively, being fostered by the state: but civil wars disturbed the order of the government and the prosperity of the ruling race: they fell before them, A.D. 264.

THE TSIN DYNASTY.

Although this dynasty takes the name as that founded by Ta-che-hwang-te, yet it is designated in Chinese by a different character. It was founded by Sze-ma-yen, who ruled over the Tsin principality, and who, when the three contending states had exhausted each other, stepped forward at the head of his forces, and secured the prize for which they had been struggling.

The family of Woo-te, which is the imperial name of Sze-ma-yen, sat upon the throne for 156 years. During that period fifteen emperors held the reins of government; yet among them all there was not one who attained any celebrity. Their rule was marked by cruelty and usurpations, and war never ceased among the different principalities. To increase the misery of the people, the Tartars ranged themselves under the banners of some tributary princes, and partook

in the general plunder of the country. At length, however, Lew-yu, prince of Sung, having been ill rewarded by his master, Gang-te, for his services against the Tartars, assassinated him, with nearly the whole of the imperial family, and ascended the throne, A.D. 420.

THE SUNG DYNASTY.

The founder of this dynasty, although a man of considerable talent, was wily and cruel. Eight emperors of his family sat upon the throne, but two only were capable of ruling; himself and Wan-te. The rest were debauchees and monsters of cruelty, exhibiting throughout their lives the desperate wickedness of the human heart. Most of them were assassinated, and the last was dethroned by Seaou-taou-ching, prince of Tse, who usurped the sovereignty A.D. 480.

THE TSE DYNASTY.

It is proper to mention here, that on the accession of the Sung dynasty, China became divided into two principal kingdoms. The princes of Wei established a vigorous government in the north, having Honân for their capital; while the Sung family reigned over the south at Nankin. This state of affairs continued until the Suy dynasty, A.D. 589, when the empire was united under one head. It is of the southern dynasty only, however, of which Chinese historians deign to speak in detail; for the princes of Wei being Tartars, were looked upon as intruding barbarians: but whether barbarians or no, and albeit though they were ignorant of the doctrines of Confucius, the Tartar princes seem to have

excelled the Chinese in practical wisdom. Whilst the southern provinces suffered from misrule, they governed the northern with complete success.

On ascending the throne, Seaou-taou-ching, who assumed the imperial name of Kaou-te, endeavoured to raise the country from its degraded condition. In this he was successful, for he left the state very prosperous; but his son and grandson were incapable of ruling. The latter was dispossessed of the throne by an intriguing statesman, named Scaou-lun, who created himself emperor under the title of Ming-te. His reign was brief. The northern emperor came up against him, and both the usurper and defender of the rightful heir perished in the struggle. After this Seaou-yen, a celebrated general, exalted Ho-te to the throne, but he soon deposed him, and having adopted the title of Prince of Leang, reigned himself, A.D. 502.

THE LEANG DYNASTY.

The reign of Leang-woo-te, which was the name assumed by the new emperor, is characterized by a fierce struggle between the two dynasties. His antagonist was a woman, and being defeated by her, he died of despair. His son was slain by one of his own generals, and Yuen-te, a relation of Leang-woo-te, was exalted to the throne. But he did not reign in peace: the same general who had slain his predecessor forced him to abdicate the throne; and when his brother, King-te, ascended it, he was forced to yield to his powerful rival likewise. Shin-pa-seën, which was the name of the victorious general, declared himself prince of Chin, and King-te

yielded up the empire to him without even being requested. He saw the storm gathering around him, and, like a wise man, took shelter in retirement to elude its fury, A.D. 557.

THE CHIN DYNASTY.

The usurper reigned under the name of Kaou-tsoo. His reign was brief, as was also that of his successors, who all spent their lives in inglorious ease. In the mean time the Suy state became very powerful; and its ruler, Yang-keën, being an ambitious man, determined to subject both the northern and southern empire to his sway. In this he succeeded. Both states yielded to the force of his arms, and he therefore became the founder of the Suy dynasty, A.D. 589.

THE SUY DYNASTY.

On ascending the throne, Yang-keën assumed the name of Kaou-tsoo, and fixed the capital of the re-united empire at Honân. His reign was marked with considerable wisdom and vigour. He encouraged literature, and laid the strong arm of the law upon the licentious. In his time the Tartars again appeared on the frontiers of China, and aware of his inability to meet them by force of arms, he sowed discord among their chiefs, and thereby avoided their hostility. He reigned in peace, and died A.D. 604.

Among the other rulers of this dynasty was Yang-te, who is celebrated in Chinese history as a scholar, and for the republication of the works of former dynasties. He was assassinated by Le-yüen, a celebrated general and statesman. Le-yuen raised Kung-te-tung to the throne, but

not long after he himself seized the reins of government, and founded the Tang dynasty, A.D. 619.

THE TANG DYNASTY.

Le-yuen ascended the throne of China under the name of Tang-kaou-tsoo. At that time, the western provinces were exposed to the ravages of the Turks, who, together with other tribes, threatened to overrun China. The state was in great danger, but Tang-kaou-tsoo averted it by policy. Instead of meeting them in the field, he employed the arms of the barbarians for their own destruction, and China thereby remained unharmed.

Tang-kaou-tsoo was a patron of literature, and he established many schools. At the same time, he persecuted the priests both of the Taou and Budhu sects. He reigned nine years, and then abdicated the throne in favour of his son Tae-tsung.

Tae-tsung followed the line of policy his father had adopted with regard to his barbarian invaders. He used all his art to set them against each other; and proved so successful that he overawed them all. He extended the frontiers of the empire to the borders of Persia, and subjected the Coreans to his sway, while peace reigned throughout his dominions.

Of the immediate successors of Tae-tsung little is known. Many of them were weak princes, and all seemed to have been ruled by eunuchs and the females of the harem. Still, though the government was degraded and effeminate, the nation was vigorous at this period. Literature, and especially poetry, flourished even more than it

did under the auspices of the Han dynasty. Unaided by its princes, the country obtained a freedom of mind unknown before in the annals of Chinese history.

The Tang dynasty was subverted by Choo-wan, the captain of a band of robbers. He was called on by Chaou-tsung to assist him in gaining freedom from the yoke of the eunuchs, who had long swayed the empire; and after he had executed the imperial commands, and had been created prince of Leang on account of his exploits, he deposed the emperor. Afterwards he raised Chaou-seuen-te to the imperial throne, but soon deposed him likewise, and founded the How-leang dynasty, A.D. 907.

It is worthy of remark, that Christianity is said to have been first made known to a few of the natives of China, during the reign of Tae-tsung, one of the emperors of the Tang dynasty, about A.D. 640. It appears to have been introduced by certain Christians of the Nestorian church; but it does not seem to have been adopted by any great number of the people. The multitude still bowed the knee to idols. Tae-tsung, the emperor, and his successors, were all weak princes, and ruled by their eunuchs; and they disregarding the voice of truth, their subjects followed their example. Darkness still covered the whole land, and "gross darkness the people."

THE HOW-LEANG DYNASTY.

On ascending the throne, Choo-wan, the robber, assumed the name of Leang-tac-tsoo. His reign was characterized by anarchy and rebellion;

but it did not last long. Leang-tae-tsoo was murdered by his own son, who was in his turn slain by his brother Leang-choo-teñ, which emperor was deposed by Chwang-too, a descendant of a Tang general, A.D. 924.

THE HOW-TANG DYNASTY.

Chwang-too was a licentious, cruel, and avaricious character. He was succeeded by Ming-tsung, a Tartar, who exhibited much practical wisdom in the government. He successively humbled his own countrymen and the insolent mandarins, while he assiduously promoted the prosperity of the nation. His son succeeded to the throne; but he was hurled from it by She-king-tang, his son-in-law, through fear of whom the last scion of this dynasty, who was named Te-te, burned himself with all the treasures of the imperial palace, A.D. 935.

THE HOW-TSIN DYNASTY.

She-king-tang obtained the empire by the aid of Tartars in Leaou-tung. He changed his name for Tsin-kaou-tsoo, under which title he ruled in peace not only over the Chinese, but the Tartars. His son, Chuh-te, however, was killed in fighting against the barbarians; and his general, Leu-che-yuen, assumed the name of Kaou-tsoo, and founded the How-han dynasty, A.D. 947.

THE HOW-HAN DYNASTY.

This dynasty only comprehended the reign of Kaou-tsoo, and his son Yin-te, who was slain in a rebellion in the western provinces. After this, Kwō-wei, one of the generals, ascended the throne, A.D. 951.

THE HOW-CHOW DYNASTY.

This dynasty could only boast of one excellent prince, namely, She-tsung, the successor of Kwō-wei. She-tsung was a father to his people, and the dread of barbarians. He displayed his wisdom by throwing down the idols of the land; by the establishment of schools; and by placing sage counsellors at the head of the administration. He was succeeded by his son Kung-te, who was in his minority, and who was dethroned by the regent Chaou-kwang-yin, A.D. 960.

THE SUNG DYNASTY.

Chaou-kwang-yin reigned under the title of Sung-kaou-tsoo. He was a man of great talent, but he perverted it to the destruction of his species. His whole life was spent in an endeavour to humble his Tartar vassals, who had long been refractory; and to accomplish this he shed the blood of millions. Some states submitted to him, but Sung-kaou-tsoo died before he could complete the subjection of the whole.

The policy which Sung-kaou-tsoo had adopted was followed by his son and successor. Tae-tsung carried on the war, but his efforts to subdue the refractory Tartars proved vain, and he relinquished the contest. The next emperor, Chin-tsung, possessed a peaceable disposition. He purchased a peace of the Tartars by paying an annual tribute, and he employed that peace in the improvement of agriculture. In the reign of Chin-tsung a census was taken of the number of people who could pay taxes. The number was 9,955,729, from which some idea may be formed of the amount of population of China at that period.

The immediate successor of this peace-loving ruler, Fin-tsung, followed the same line of conduct. So also did Ying-tsung, Shin-tsung, and Che-tsung. But not so did Hwuy-tsung; determined upon driving the barbarians from Leaou-tung, he entered into a treaty with the Kin Tartars, who, after they had defeated his enemies, proved faithless, and carried him prisoner into the Shamo desert where he died.

During the reign of Kin-tsung, the capital of Peking was plundered by the Tartars, who resolved to subject part of China; but the empire was saved by the prudence of a woman, who placed Kaou-tsung, a son of Hwuy-tsung, upon the throne, and removed the capital from Honán to Hang-choo. The Tartars, however, took possession of nearly all the country north of the river Hwang-ho, and established an independent dynasty, known under the name of Kin, and which existed for upwards of a century.

While the empire was thus divided, the ruling dynasty was called Nan-sung, or Southern Sung, their dominions being confined to Southern China. It was re-united, A.D. 1225, by Le-tsung, who completely subverted the Kin dynasty. In his struggle with them, however, he called in the aid of Genghis, the leader of the Mongols, who proved a treacherous ally. During the remainder of the reign of Le-tsung, as well as that of his son Too-tsung, the Mongols sought to overthrow the Chinese government. Too-tsung left three sons, all minors; and before the eldest, Kung-tsung, ascended the throne, the Mongols had overrun several provinces. Nor did they then rest satisfied. They still warred against Kung-tsung, and they cap-

tured both him and his capital. Twang-tsung, his successor, was equally unfortunate. He was chased by the Mongols to Canton province, where he died. A tragical fate, also, awaited Te-ping, the only remaining scion of the imperial family. He had taken refuge in the fleet; but being pursued by the Mongols, a minister named Loo-sew-foo embraced the young emperor, and threw himself with him into the sea. This race being thus cut off, Kublai, the then leader of the Mongols, proclaimed himself emperor, A.D. 1279.

THE YUEN DYNASTY.

The reign of Kublai was called Che-yuen, and his ancestral title is She-tsoo. He appears to have been one of the greatest rulers China ever possessed; but being a Tartar, and hence deemed a barbarian, Chinese historians have avenged themselves on his memory by passing over his exploits in silence. How great these must have been, is proved by the fact that all the tribes of the Siberian ice-fields, the deserts of Asia, and the country between China and the Caspian, acknowledged his sway. He fitted out a fleet of four thousand vessels in order to subject Japan; but bounds were set to his restless ambition. This fleet was dispersed by a storm, and before he could put another in motion, death ended his schemes, A.D. 1294.

Kublai was succeeded by his grandson, Ching-tsung, who reigned in peace. So also did Wootsung, his successor, who exerted himself to render his subjects happy. In his reign foreign trade seems to have been carried on very briskly, for it was deemed necessary that the exportation of gold,

silver, grain, and silk should be prohibited. In the days of Jin-tsung, the next emperor, the administration underwent a complete change. All foreigners holding high stations were expelled, and Chinese scholars appointed in their room. Philosophers governed the country; but their rule being rather of a speculative than a practical nature, proved fatal to the reigning dynasty. Bands of robbers overawed the government; and this state of affairs existed during the reigns of five successive emperors, when, in the midst of wild anarchy, Chuen-yuen-chang, who was originally a robber, appeared as a patriotic leader, and laid the foundation of the Ming dynasty. By him the last emperor of the Mongol race was chased from the throne, and the Mongols hastily fled to their deserts. Thus this dynasty ceased, and China was again ruled by native emperors, A.D. 1368.

THE MING DYNASTY.

From the accession of Chuen-yuen-chang, Chinese history speaks of the emperors of China under the name of their reigns, and not of their ancestral titles; his reign was denominated Hung-woo.

The first acts of Hung-woo were to regulate his harem and palace, to enact laws for the better administration of government, and to chastise the Mongols in their inhospitable deserts. He ruled with a master spirit; and the country which had long been a scene of anarchy and rapine, soon became tranquil. Even the Confucians, and other sects, whose zeal rendered them turbulent, were overawed by him, without his

calling the sword of persecution into action. He granted universal toleration ; his chief study being to benefit, and not to oppress his subjects. His reign was happy ; but he caused great discord among his family by granting to each of his children a separate principality. This was made manifest during the reign of Keën-wan, his grandson. That emperor, after having showed much moderation, prompted by evil counsellors, suddenly dethroned his uncles, the princes of Min, Tseang, Tse, and Tae, and disgraced them to the rank of plebeians. The public mind recoiled with abhorrence from such an act ; and the Prince of Yen, their only remaining brother, taking advantage of it, marched with a large army to Nankin, the capital, and the gates being opened to him, he burned down the palace with remorseless fury. The empress perished in the flames, but Keën-wan escaped, and, after wandering about for some time, died in obscurity.

The Prince of Yen adopted the name of Yung-la, under which he reigned. Having destroyed all the partisans of his nephew, which he did with unrelenting severity, he carried war into the heart of Tartary. He was successful in two campaigns, erecting a monument of his triumphs even in the dreary wilds of Tchitchihar. To him, also, is ascribed the credit of having subjected Tunkin and Cochin-China to the Chinese sway. At the same time, Yung-la was a munificent patron of literature.

Yung-la was succeeded by Hung-he, who lived only one year. His successor, Seuén-tih, waged successful war against the Tartars, and thus ensured the safety of his country. He reigned ten

years; and then Ching-tung, who was yet a child, ascended the throne. The reign of Ching-tung was peaceful so long as his mother lived; but on her decease, he was induced by his preceptor to engage in a war with the Tartars, which proved his ruin. His army was routed, and he was taken prisoner.

During the captivity of Ching-tung, his brother, Ching-wha, assumed the title of emperor, and after his release he still filled the throne. Ching-wha amply revenged himself upon the Tartars, and suppressed a rebellion in Hoo-kwang.

The decay of the Ming dynasty is dated from Ching-wha. In the reign of his successors, Hung-che, Ching-tih, Kea-tsing, Lung-king, Wan-leih, Teen-kee, and Tsung-ching, the country was devastated by war from without, and famine and rebellion from within. The Tartars and Japanese successively opposed their forces against China with effect, and Cochin-China was irretrievably lost by revolt. In the reign of the last emperor, Le and Shang, two desperate robbers, contested between them the possession of the empire, and Le was successful. He invaded Shen-se, advanced to the gates of Peking, which were opened to him; and the emperor having destroyed himself and family in despair, the Ming dynasty was utterly subverted, A.D. 1634.

It may be remarked, that during the reign of Kea-tsing, one of the last rulers of this race, the Portuguese found their way into China. A new era seemed then to be approaching; for their Popish missionaries penetrated into the empire, and communicated some knowledge both of the

religion and the sciences of Europe. But their efforts proved abortive. The religion they taught was a corrupted Christianity, and their work was brought to nought. The pure doctrines of the Bible alone, are able to demolish the strongholds of superstition which have for ages existed in China. Even had the Portuguese succeeded, it would have been only setting up one mode of superstition for another; the heart of the worshipper would still have remained unaffected, and the mind unenlightened. For Popery is a religion which appeals to the sight, and not to the inner man. It leaves that grand truth uttered by our Saviour to Nicodemus out of the question: "Ye must be born again;" and substitutes for it superstitious inventions of human device.

THE TA-TSING DYNASTY.

At the time when the robber chief, Le, took possession of the capital of China, and declared himself emperor, an army of Mantchoo Tartars, who had taken possession of Leaou-tung during the reign of Wan-leih, were drawn up on the frontiers of that province under Tsung-tih, their ruler. He was opposed by Woo-san-kwei, a brave Chinese general, who, when he heard of the tragical end of Tsung-ching, made peace with Tsung-tih, and called in his aid against the successful robber. By the assistance of the Mongol and Mantchoo auxiliaries, the usurper was overthrown, but Tsung-tih refused to return home. Consultations ensued, in the midst of which the Mantchoo leader died; but the grandees entered

Pekin in triumph, and proclaimed his nephew emperor, under the name of Shun-che.

Shun-che was a minor, and the regency which ruled during his minority did much to conciliate the Chinese. Notwithstanding, the mandarins obstinately opposed his reign. Four princes of the Ming family were successively raised by them to the throne; but they were all defeated by the victorious Tartars. Shun-che still reigned, and at the death of his uncle, Amawang, in 1651, he assumed the reins of government.

Shun-che was instructed in the art of government by a German Jesuit, to whose suggestions perhaps he mainly owed his success. After the death of his uncle, he ruled, for the most part, in peace, having only one antagonist to encounter, namely, a Fo-keën man, whose father had fallen a victim to the treachery of the Mantchoos, and who, incited by revenge, braved the whole imperial forces, by ruling over the Chinese seas. Shun-che reigned solely eleven years, and was succeeded by his heir, the renowned Kang-he.

Notwithstanding much had been done during the reign of Shun-che towards the establishment of the Mantchoo Tartars in China, such a consummation was doubtless fully brought to pass by the master mind of Kang-he. He it was, who, by his vigour and his skill, laid a firm foundation for the throne of his dynasty, which is still in existence. For not only did he by his personal character win the hearts of the Chinese, but by his prowess he subdued his foreign foes. The Mongols and Kalmucks were humbled by him; and he even prescribed a treaty to the Rus-

sians, who had pushed their settlement to the river Amour.

Having thus proved victorious over all his enemies, Kang-he applied himself to the reformation of the government, in which he was equally successful. He endeavoured to introduce arts and sciences, and to destroy the system of slavish adherence to antiquated custom, which is the characteristic feature of the Chinese. But in this he failed. What the Chinese were before and were then, that they still remain. Notwithstanding, he gave a fresh impulse to literature by the expulsion of all those doctors from Han-lin college, who could not give proof of their qualifications, and by having a national dictionary compiled. Under his direction, also, the whole country was surveyed by the Jesuits; and he so far triumphed over national prejudices, as to adorn his palace by European arts.

Kang-he ruled sixty years over the empire of China. He died in 1723; and was succeeded by Yung-chin, who obtained the imperial dignity by stratagem. His brother, who had been nominated heir of the crown, being absent in Tartary, he usurped the throne, and sent all his nearest relations into exile, one brother excepted, to whom he was tenderly attached, lest they should prove rivals.

One of the first measures of Yung-chin was to banish the Jesuit missionaries to Canton, because of their disposition to intrigue, and the influence they had gained thereby at court. To their conduct at this period, as well as the jealous eye with which the Chinese ever look upon "barbarians," may be attributed the entire expulsion of

the missionary from the interior of China. They saw that while the Jesuits professedly served God, they sought with eagerness after mammon; and looking upon other missionaries as similar characters, have hence denied them that free intercourse by which alone the people of China can be fully instructed in the ways of righteousness.

Yung-chin was succeeded by Keën-lung, who, like his great predecessor, Kang-he, reigned during the long period of sixty years. Keën-lung was no unworthy inheritor of the fame and dominion of his grandfather. He was a munificent patron of learning, and, under him, the empire was at peace. One expedition only, of any celebrity, was undertaken by him, which was against the Meaou-tse, a race of mountaineers on the borders of Kuei-chow, and not far from the province of Canton. The emperor boasted that he had subdued them; but there is reason to believe that they still not only retained their independence, but that they were victors. Never yet have they submitted to the Tartar tonsure, which is the only mark of Tartar conquest.

During the reign of Keën-lung, the Dutch, English, and Portuguese sent embassies to China, which were favourably received. He was upon the point of being involved in a war with Russia, but, fortunately for the Chinese empire, matters were amicably arranged. When he had ruled sixty years, which just completes a revolution of the Chinese cycle, he resigned his throne to his son Kea-king, A.D. 1795.

Kea-king was ill calculated to maintain the imperial dignity after such an able ruler as his father. His habits were extremely profligate.

After the morning audience, from which no emperor can excuse himself, he generally retired to the company of comedians: he even took them with him when he proceeded to sacrifice at the temples of Heaven and Earth. This conduct gave birth to secret machinations and open rebellion. His life was frequently attempted; and scarcely a year elapsed without a revolution breaking out in some part of the empire. His profligacy brought him into universal contempt, and his pusillanimity rendered him the object of scorn. The care of administration was left to others, and he wallowed in pleasures of the grossest nature, and in the midst of which he died, leaving the empire to Taou-kwang, A.D. 1821.

Taou-kwang, which signifies "Reason's glory," is the present emperor of China. He was appointed to succeed his father, because he nobly defended him when his palace was stormed by a band of robbers. His personal character is much better than that of his father, though his conduct has been far from realizing the lofty title ascribed to him. The torrent of corruption which broke forth among his subjects during the life of Kea-king remains unstemmed, while he lives a life of inglorious ease in the retirements of his palace. In the civil administration he has done nothing requiring particular notice. As he found the laws, so they still remain. The great maxim of his government is to remain passive, and to accommodate himself to circumstances as they occur. Twice only has the emperor's energy been roused to action in the field, and in both cases without honour. When a rebellion occurred in Turkestan, he quelled it by bribes of silver and

gold; and when he arrayed his forces against the English in the recent war, they were on all occasions defeated. He has been compelled to purchase peace by indemnification.

Like his immediate predecessor, Taou-kwang has exhibited a determined aversion and hostility to the Roman Catholic religion. The "religion of the western ocean" is to him an abomination; and he has given full proof of this in expelling the last of those European missionaries from Peking, who had been attached for two hundred years to that tribunal, whose business it is to observe the motions of the heavenly bodies, and to construct the Imperial Calendar. He has also warred against European science. The last traces of it have been nearly obliterated in the capital; and a series of fierce edicts have been successively published to prohibit the Chinese from making themselves acquainted with it again. They have been commanded to have no dealings with barbarians!

And yet the recent successes of the English open a wide door of hope for the true philanthropist. The two people are more closely united than they have ever before been in the annals of history. Twice indeed have the English been *permitted* to send embassies to the court of China, but they were received as unworthy of entering into the "celestial empire." But now it is otherwise. The humanity of the conquerors towards their foes has begotten in the breasts of the Chinese respect for them. Even the haughtiness of the court is subdued by it, and a disposition for a close and friendly alliance is clearly exhibited. From this contact, therefore, with the Christians

of England, it may be hoped that the "hoary-headed nation," China, is approaching a great crisis. If Christians do their duty, they will pour forth the word of truth on the right hand and on the left throughout that vast empire; and thus the long struggle between the two powers will be made subservient to the glory of God and the salvation of immortal souls. China out of its superabundant population shall then present a scene never before witnessed—a people serving and worshipping the one true God. Its idols shall be cast to the moles and the bats; its flimsy webs of philosophy rent asunder; and its inhabitants shall flock to the temple of the living God as "doves to the windows." And that such a consummation shall one day take place, the sure word of prophecy testifies. Every nation and every kingdom under heaven—and the vast and populous empire of China included—shall become "the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ." All shall own his gentle sway!



CHAPTER II.

THE CHINESE COURT



THE EMPEROR OF CHINA, WITH MANDARINS.

IF absolute and extended power could impart happiness to the human breast, then the emperor of China might prove the object of envy to all monarchs. He reigns over almost one-third of the human race, and throughout his dominions

his will is law. Arrogating to himself the title of "Interpreter of the decrees of Heaven,"* he issues his edicts as he pleases, and his subjects bow submissively at his feet. However arbitrary, cruel, and unjust they may be, none venture to oppose him. He is even worshipped with Divine honours throughout the empire. He professes to worship Heaven, and the people blindly worship him. This will be clearly seen from the testimony of an eye-witness to the celebration of the emperor's birthday at Peking:—

"The first day was consecrated to the purpose of rendering a solemn, sacred, and devout homage to the supreme majesty of the emperor. The princes, tributaries, ambassadors, great officers of state, and principal mandarins, were assembled in a vast hall, and upon particular notice were introduced into an inner building, bearing the semblance of a temple. It was chiefly furnished with instruments of music, among which were sets of cylindrical bells, suspended in a line from ornamented frames of wood, and gradually diminishing in size from one extremity to the other, and also triangular pieces of metal, arranged in the same order as the bells. To the sound of these instruments, a slow and solemn hymn was sung by eunuchs, who had such a command over their voices as to resemble the effect of musical glasses at a distance. The performers were directed in

* This is only one among the numerous titles of the emperor of China. He is also designated the Son of Heaven; Imperial Supreme; Holy Lord; Most High; Lord of Ten Thousand Years; King of Kings, etc. One of his most appropriate titles is, King of Ten Thousand Islands, inasmuch as the main land of China is surrounded by islands in great numbers, which he governs.

gliding from one tone to another, by the striking of a shrill and sonorous cymbal; and the judges of music among the gentlemen of the embassy were much pleased with their execution. The whole had, indeed, a grand effect. During the performance, and at particular signals, nine times repeated, all the persons present prostrated themselves nine times, except the ambassador and his suite, who made a profound obeisance: but he whom it was meant to honour continued, as if it were in imitation of the Deity, invisible the whole time. The awful impression made upon the minds of men by this apparent worship of a fellow-mortal was not to be effaced by any immediate scenes of gaiety, which were postponed to the following day."

This ceremony is universal and simultaneous through the chief cities of China. All worship the creature in the person of their emperor; and yet it would not appear that the emperor, or his court, think that such honours are rightly due unto him. The homage is apparently exacted as a trick of state, for every device is called into action to perpetuate the impression of awe. Thus no person is allowed to pass before the outer gate of the palace, either on horseback or in a vehicle; the vacant throne is worshipped when the emperor does not occupy it; an imperial despatch is received in the provinces with offerings of incense and prostration, looking towards Peking; and there is a paved walk to the principal audience hall on which none may walk but the emperor: to such miserable expedients will man resort, to gain power over his fellow-man, and to oppose his Maker. It is in vain that the assertion is put

forth that the emperor has received such authority in order to show compassion, maintain peace, and promote civilization amongst all tribes: actual practice denounces such a declaration to be a vile subterfuge, and history confirms the fact. The love of power alone has stimulated the emperors of China to climb such a giddy height over their subjects.

The sovereign of China has the absolute disposal of the succession. If he pleases, he can name his heir out of his own family, several examples of which are given in the preceding chapter. Generally, however, as is natural, the Chinese emperors have sought to perpetuate their dynasties by the succession of the members of their own family—the eldest son, if deemed worthy ; if not, a younger, or some more remote branch of the race.

As in most oriental countries, the imperial sanction to all public acts is conveyed by the impression of a seal. Any remarks or directions made by the emperor himself are written in red, commonly styled “the vermilion pencil.” The whole appears to be dictated by him, for he neither proposes questions, nor asks advice of his ministers. They remain mute while he promulgates his will as the “Son of Heaven.” It is probable, however, that in secret he frequently has confidential counsellors. In public he acts alone, in order to maintain his self-importance. The history of the Chinese declares, indeed, that but few emperors among them have been sufficiently sage to rule without counsel.

•All edicts of a special nature, after being addressed to the proper tribunal, are promulgated

in the Pekin Gazette. This paper contains nothing but what relates to the government, and it is death to falsify any article inserted therein. The articles consist of edicts, proclamations, rescripts, orders in council, promotions, etc., which bear different names according to their contents. The most striking amongst them are those in which the emperor exhorts and admonishes the world to become virtuous, and turn to righteousness. These articles are very long, and contain many maxims drawn from the writings of Chinese moralists, which are well worth the attention of the reader; for if they are not calculated to affect the heart, they convey much instruction to the mind.*

As high priest of the empire, the emperor of China alone, with his representatives, sacrifices in the government temples. These sacrifices are composed of victims and incense, and the mode of offering them is precisely the same as among the nations of antiquity. The sacrificial duties of the emperor are far more numerous and burdensome than any others laid upon his shoulders. They comprehend a tedious ceremonial, and a number of vain rites, none of which he may neglect. These cannot be laid before the reader, but the following description of an imperial procession to the temple dedicated to Teën, may give some idea of the scene within:—"This imperial procession was headed by twenty-four drummers, and as many trumpeters: next to them were an equal number of men armed with red varnished staves, seven or eight feet long, and adorned

* See some specimens of these maxims in the chapter on Chinese literature.

with golden foliage. Then followed one hundred soldiers carrying halberds, ending in a crescent and gilded at the end; then four hundred great lanterns finely adorned, and four hundred torches made of wood, which burn for a long time, and yield a great light; two hundred spears, some set off with flowing silk of various colours, others with tails of panthers, foxes, and other animals; twenty-four banners, painted with the signs of the zodiac; fifty-six banners, exhibiting the fifty-six constellations into which all the stars are divided; two hundred fans, supported by long gilded sticks, painted with figures of dragons, birds, and animals; twenty-four umbrellas, richly adorned; and a beaufet, carried by officers of the kitchen, and furnished with gold utensils, such as basons, ewers, etc. The emperor followed on horseback, with a grave majestic air, pompously dressed; on each side of him was carried a rich umbrella, large enough to shade both him and his horse: he was surrounded with ten white horses, led, whose saddles and bridles were enriched with gold and precious stones; one hundred spear-men, and the pages of the bed-chamber. After this appeared, in the same order, the princes of the blood, the kings, the principal mandarins, and the lords of his court, in their habits of ceremony; five hundred young gentlemen belonging to the palace; one thousand footmen in red gowns, embroidered with flowers, and stars of gold and silver; then thirty-six men carried an open chair, followed by another that was close and much larger, supported by one hundred chairmen. Lastly, came four large chariots, two drawn by elephants, and two by horses, covered

with embroidered housings; each chair and chariot, had one hundred and fifty men following it for its guard. The procession was closed by two thousand civilians, and as many military mandarins, in magnificent habits of ceremony."

That such an imposing procession as this should leave an impression of awe upon the minds of the multitudinous subjects of the emperor of heathen China, can form no matter of wonder. By such an appeal to the bodily senses judgment is surrendered and hood-winked, and superstition takes possession of the whole inner man. The soul is oppressed by it; and the knees, obeying the dictates of awe, readily bend to the creature. Hence it is, together with his edicts, that the emperor of China becomes lord paramount of the bodies and souls of his subjects. Hence it is that he is looked up to, and worshipped as a God.

Another reason for the superstitious reverence which the Chinese pay to their emperor, may be found in the fact, that he is represented as forming the link between God and man; as having at all times access to the heavenly powers, of whom he can not only request, but demand blessings; as possessing power over the whole material and immaterial world; and as superintending the course of nature. These hollow and blasphemous assertions weigh with the multitude, and insure their ready veneration. So also do their professions of paternal love for their subjects, which are ever discernible in their edicts. These are well calculated to take the heart captive, and especially when it is considered that one of the leading characteristics of the Chinese nation is ignorant simplicity.

It is the custom of the Chinese emperor to give, from time to time, an account of his conduct to the nation. When he does this, after some public calamity, his expressions are those of the deepest humility. They are, however, only to be considered as the language of the lips, and not of the heart. The sentiments which such edicts contain are chosen from the best models of his predecessors, and the paper is drawn up for his use by a member of the Han-lin College. The form of a petition addressed to the "azure heavens" for rain is subjoined, as it will not only illustrate the present but preceding paragraphs. It was promulgated by the present emperor, and it reads thus :—

"Kneeling, a memorial is presented to cause affairs to be heard. Alas, imperial Heaven ! were not the world afflicted by extraordinary changes, I would not dare to present extraordinary services; but this year the drought is unusual. The summer is past, and no rain has fallen. Agriculture and human beings feel the dire calamity, and beasts, insects, herbs, and trees, almost cease to live.

"I, the minister of Heaven, am placed over mankind, and am responsible for keeping the world in order, and tranquillizing the people. Although it is impossible for me to sleep or eat with composure; although I am scorched with grief, and palsied with anxiety, still no genial showers are vouchsafed. Some days ago, I fasted, and offered rich sacrifices on the altars of the gods of the land and the grain, and had to be thankful for gathering clouds and light showers, but not sufficient to cause gladness. Looking up,

I consider that Heaven's heart is benevolence and love. The sole cause is my daily sins, and my little sincerity and devotion: hence I have been unable to move Heaven's heart, and bring down abundant blessings.

"Having searched the records,* I find that in the twenty-fourth year of Keën-lung, my imperial grandfather, the high, honourable, and pure emperor, reverently performed a great snow service. I feel impelled by ten thousand considerations to look up and imitate the usage; and with trembling anxiety assail Heaven, examine myself, and consider my errors, looking up and hoping that I may obtain pardon. I ask myself, whether I have been irreverent in sacrifice? Whether pride and prodigality have had a place unobserved in my heart? Whether I have uttered irreverent words, and deserved reprehension? Whether rewards have been conferred or punishments inflicted in strict equity?"

After this, the edict goes on to hint at the emperor's probable faults, which are here passed over, and it thus concludes:—

"Prostrate, I beg imperial Heaven to pardon my ignorance and stupidity, and to grant me renovation; for myriads of innocent people are involved by me, who am but a single man. My sins are so numerous that it is difficult to escape from them. Summer is past, and autumn arrived; to wait longer is impossible. Beating my head, I pray imperial Heaven to hasten and confer a

* This will serve to remind the reader of that incident in the book of Esther, in which it is related that Ahasuerus, when he could not sleep commanded the records to be brought and read before him, that he might discover whether he had left any duty unfulfilled. Such is an oriental custom.

gracious deliverance, a speedy and divinely beneficial rain, and to save the people's lives, and in some degree redeem my iniquities. Alas, imperial Heaven! observe these things. Alas, imperial Heaven! be gracious. I am grieved, alarmed, and frightened.

"This memorial is presented reverently, 12th year of Taou-kwang, 28th day, 6th month"—(July 25, 1832).

These edicts relative to the emperor's conduct are not confined to seasons of calamity. When the country is in a flourishing state he issues some of a different character, in which he praises himself, and thanks Heaven that he is so perfect a man as to ensure such blessings. And it is worthy of remark, that this has been the policy of *all* Chinese emperors, whether natives or foreigners. However different their manners may have been before, so soon as they have seated themselves in the "divine utensil," or the throne, they set themselves up as the mediators between Heaven and their subjects. Even the rude and fierce Mantchoo Tartar made no scruples in adopting for his title "The Son of Heaven," when the fortunes of war placed the sceptre of the empire in his hands. Policy taught him to rule as though he were a genuine descendant of "the black-haired race."

As might be reasonably supposed of so exalted a mortal, the installation of a Chinese emperor is a very imposing ceremony. An eye-witness of that of Kang-he thus describes the ceremony:—"All the mandarins were ranged on both sides, dressed in silk, flowered with gold in the form of roses. There were fifty men who held great

umbrellas of gold brocade and silk, with their staves gilt, divided into two rows. On the side of them were fifty other officers, having large fans of silk, embroidered with gold; and near these were twenty-eight large standards, embroidered with golden stars, and the figures of the moon in all its changes. In order to represent its twenty-eight mansions in the heavens, and its different conjunctions and oppositions with the sun, as they appear in the intersection of the circles, which the astronomers call nodes; these things were delineated with considerable accuracy. A hundred standards followed these, and the rest of the mandarins carried maces, axes, hammers, and other instruments of war or court ceremony, with heads of strange monsters and other animals." Such is the paraphernalia of the occasion when a mortal is self-constituted "The Son of Heaven!"

Concerning the private life of the emperor of China, scarcely anything is known among Europeans. He appears very little in public, regarding it the safest policy to withdraw from the gaze of his subjects, in order to inspire them with the greatest awe. Frequent intercourse with them is deemed unsafe, as it would greatly diminish their reverence for his "sacred person." As for the charms which constitute the pleasures of civilized life, they are little known to such a despotic monarch. His time, for the most part, is spent in the harem, among women and eunuchs, where a veil is gathered over his proceedings which cannot be drawn aside. The imperial palace is forbidden ground to all except those of **his own household**, unless when he gives an

audience. As it is on these occasions may be seen from the following description, given by some Roman Catholic missionaries:—

“The palace, which shines with carving, varnish, gilding, and painting, stands upon a kind of platform, paved with large square pieces of a beautiful green marble, polished like glass, and laid so close together, that one cannot distinguish the joinings. At the entrance of the great hall there is a door, which opens into a large square room, paved with marble, where the emperor was sitting on an estrade, after the Tartar fashion. The beams of the roof were supported by wooden columns, varnished with red, and fixed in such a manner in the wall that they were even with its surface. We performed the usual ceremonies; that is, we ranged ourselves in a line facing the emperor, and fell on our knees three times, bowing every time to the ground. In receiving these marks of our respect, he did us great favour; for when the mandarins of the six sovereign courts come every fifth day, on the first day of the year, and on the emperor’s birth-day, to perform this ceremony, he is scarcely ever present; he is even at some distance from the palace when they pay him this homage. After we had performed this duty, we approached his person, kneeling on one side, and in a line. He asked us our names, ages, and country, and entertained us with a sweetness and affability which would be surprising in any prince, but was much more so in the emperor of China.”

•The table of a Chinese emperor is supplied with but few dainties. The wine he drinks is made from sour mare’s milk, and would be very

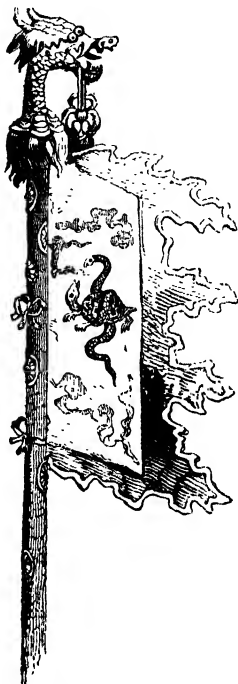
unpalatable to those accustomed to the juice of the grape. Sometimes he gives a public repast at his palace, to which a certain class of persons are invited, as the aged, whom the emperor himself waits upon ; and the literati, who partake of his bounties under the sound of music.

The emperor of China participates in various diversions, the most remarkable of which is hunting, in the season of autumn. It more resembles a campaign than a hunt, on account of the large number of soldiers who follow in his train. The custom was, indeed, introduced in order to inure the soldiers to fatigue, and to maintain in them a spirit worthy of the sons of the desert. But the means could hardly have answered the end, for the prey was easily taken at all times, it being the custom to surround, and not pursue it in a straight line, or to whatever course fear might prompt it to take. At present the custom seems to be falling into disuse, owing, perhaps, to the fact, that the death of Kea-king, the father of the present monarch, was caused by an accident he met with in hunting on the mountain of Kwan-jin.

In former days, as in the reign of Kang-he, it was customary for the emperor to make extensive tours in the provinces, in order to take cognizance of the state of the country. Now he is seldom heard of beyond Peking and Jehol. When he does leave the palace, he is carried in a sedan-chair, and is preceded by the princes and nobility on horseback ; the prime ministers and presidents of the six boards, hereafter described, marching before him. These are followed by three companies of twenty men each, bearing yellow flags,

embroidered with dragons, umbrellas of the same colour, and fans. After these come the life-guards, clothed in yellow, wearing a kind of helmet, and armed with a javelin or halberd, gilt and adorned with the figure of the sun, or moon, or of some animal. The emperor is carried by twelve men in yellow, and is surrounded with musicians.

On the occasion of the pilgrimage to the imperial tombs, the emperor of China is surrounded with great pomp. All his grandees accompany him, and his expedition more resembles the march of an army going out to battle than a procession of pilgrims. When he has arrived at the land of his birth, he, with his grandees, pay their devotion at the graves of his ancestors. But here the idea of a pilgrimage ends. Regardless of the lesson which a sight of the tomb is calculated to impart, the emperor divests himself of all care, and



IMPERIAL DRAGON BANNER
OF CHINA.

abandons himself to rural sports, as though he were anxious to forget that, like the departed great, he also was mortal. But although he arrogates to himself titles which convey an idea of his immortality, death, the mighty leveller of the human race, pays no more regard to the emperor of China, than he does to the beggar on a dunghill.

The manner of mourning on the demise of an emperor of China, may be seen in the following rules, laid down in an edict issued at the death of Kea-king.

“ When any one of the immaculate sages of the family is numbered with those gone before, the succeeding emperor shall be the chief mourner. He shall take the fringes from his cap, and wail and stamp his feet for sorrow. The empress, and all the ladies of inferior rank in the palace or harem, shall put away their ear-rings, and every ornament of their head-dress. A table shall be spread out before the coffin, and there the kings, princes, and nobles shall pour out libations. The empress, concubines, and imperial children, and grandchildren, shall all assemble there, to weep and stamp their feet, as an expression of grief. After the first burst of sorrow is over, they shall retire. Then the imperial successor shall put on mourning, cut off the ribbon with which his tail is plaited, and take up his abode in a hovel with the corpse. The princes, imperial grandchildren, the kings, nobles, and great officers of the household, and all the kindred, shall likewise cut off their tails; and the empress, concubines, and ladies of the harem shall shave their heads.

“ The emperor shall mourn for three years,

and, during the first hundred days, shall cause all imperial edicts to be written with blue ink. During as many days, the Chinese shall desist from shaving their heads. The officers of the government at Peking shall not give their sons and daughters in marriage for the space of one year. The Mongol kings and nobles, as well as ambassadors from Corea, who may be at Peking, shall wear mourning and fringeless caps. Ladies, also, who may accompany them, shall not wear any ornament in their head-dresses."

The honours paid to a deceased empress are nearly as great as those paid to the emperor himself. Of this there can be no wonder; for during life her power is second only to that of her royal spouse. In some cases, indeed, as at the present day, the empress rules, notwithstanding the Chinese constitution forbids them to meddle in state affairs. Love of ease and pleasure have frequently induced the emperor to part at least with a moiety of his power, and sometimes he has appeared but a cipher in the state.

By the Chinese nation, the empress is supposed to represent mother earth, whilst the emperor personifies heaven. In this high capacity, she is considered to influence nature, and to possess a transforming power. In particular, she is charged with the homage due to the god of the silk-worm; and it is her duty to rear this insect, for the encouragement of her sex. Under her inspection, also, silk stuffs are woven by the ladies of the harem, and annually brought as offerings to the gods. Her sway, unless she usurps the authority of the emperor, is confined to the palace, and acts of benevolence. In the former she is absolute

monarch ; and there are many instances on record of their exertions on behalf of suffering humanity, which display the tender compassion of a woman's heart. Whole districts have been rescued from annihilation, by the timely relief of food and clothing which they have afforded them. Despite of the glitter and pomp by which they were surrounded, and which, too often, stifle the emotions of pity, they have shown themselves to be women still.

The manner in which the empress of China is chosen, illustrates and receives illustration from the records of Persian manners, in the book of Esther. They are raised to that rank from the imperial harem, which is periodically supplied with a number of young females, mostly the daughters of noblemen. Frequently, as in the case of Esther, she is chosen for her beauty; but the choice is sometimes determined by the birth and connexions of the individual. From the moment the emperor has fixed his choice, the empress assumes the government of the harem; and the females therein lavish the same ceremonies and homage upon her as upon the emperor.

Concerning the harem of the Chinese emperor but little can be said. It does not appear to be equally licentious with that of the Turkish sultan, but it is frequently the abode of envy and intrigue, and always of sorrow.

In this abode of splendid misery, as in all oriental courts, eunuchs are to be found; and they maintain their character for intrigue in China, as they did in all the courts of antiquity. This is discernible in the "Summary of Chinese History," where many a plot devised and executed

by them is recorded. The present dynasty has made regulations to prevent their cabals, and even limited their numbers ; but they prove factious still. They have been repeatedly accused of laying plots ; and one was concerned in the rebellion against Kea-king, for which he suffered an ignominious death. When a weak prince ascends the throne, they are sure to become dangerous to the state. By their arts they inevitably gain the ascendancy over such a character ; and, leaguings with powerful statesmen, they then frequently subvert the government.

Another class of persons, equally dangerous to the safety of the reigning dynasty with the eunuchs, are the Lama priests. In the days of Kang-he and Keën-lung, an establishment was granted these priests in the palace ; and they likewise possess temples in the neighbourhood of the imperial pleasure-houses. Thus situated, and possessing great influence over the weak and superstitious, they are ever seeking to enrich themselves, and to usurp authority. On several occasions, they have obtruded themselves into the harem, and there fomented disturbances ; and yet they still maintain their position in the palace. To eject them by force, indeed, would probably be fatal to the interest of the existing dynasty ; for the minds of both the Mantchoo Tartars and Chinese who form the court, are led captive by the gross absurdities taught by the Lamas. Hence, any restrictions now laid upon them, would be to call the latent sparks of rebellion into action.

The number of male attendants at the palace

is very limited. Females and eunuchs, however, are so numerous, that, together with the officers who are constantly being summoned to court, the interior palace is made to resemble a city with many thousand inhabitants. These officers may in truth be considered as part of the household of the emperor; and in order to represent the court of China as it really is, it is necessary to describe them as they exist according to their rank.

THE IMPERIAL CLASS.

The imperial family is so numerous that all the principal stations of government might be filled with its members. But this is not the policy in China at the present day. Taught by experience of former ages, they are carefully excluded from all authority, and even from all opportunities of acquiring power. The life of a private gentleman is, indeed, far more enviable than theirs; for while they have no respectable establishment, their liberty, also, is confined within narrow limits. A high-sounding title is the only portion they enjoy; and that is not secure, for by misdeeds it may be, as it frequently is, forfeited. Nor is it by misdeeds alone that they are degraded. A superior genius is sufficient to ensure its possessor imprisonment or exile. At the present day several of the descendants of imperial majesty live like porters at Peking, and hide their birth in order to cover their shame. Those who live without occupation frequently indulge in a life of vicious ease; and it is not uncommon, in such cases, for them to be

transported to the deserts of Mantchouria, that they may learn to inure themselves to a hardy life.

In order to keep the princes of the blood in awe, they are placed under the control of the Tsung-jin-foo, a tribunal which consists of six individuals, all of them bearing high titles, and possessing the entire confidence of the emperor. It is the duty of this tribunal to keep an exact register of the births, marriages, deaths, and relations of the princes. This they do, and they divide their genealogical tables into yellow and red; the former including the imperial kindred, and the latter the collateral branches. These lists are submitted once in ten years to the emperor, when he confers on each their titles, as well as other times, upon the recommendation of the Tsung-jin-foo.

These titles are conferred under four considerations: as hereditary; as an imperial favour; on account of having rendered some prominent service to the state; and by right of having passed the examinations. They are twelve in number, and are composed of Mantchoo and Chinese names, of which no translation can be given. Seven titles are distributed among the female members of the court, the first of which is given to the legitimate daughters of the emperor; the second to the offspring of his concubines; and the remaining five to the descendants of the higher nobility. The inferior grades are called Tsung-neu, or princesses in general.

The examinations alluded to, consist in the proficiency of military exercises, as bow-shooting, riding, and gymnastics; they take place every

quarter, and a due report thereof is made to the emperor. He himself is often present, to superintend the drill, when he rewards the ablest among them, not by wealth or honours, but by a favourable glance of his eye!

The princes are obliged to study Mantchoo and Chinese literature; but it would appear that their education, except in the military art, is very lax. To assist in their studies, and to superintend their domestic habits, a number of inferior officers are appointed; but these, like the governors of the Greek youth, in the days of antiquity, frequently corrupt rather than improve their manners.

Among the titles which the emperor of China bestows on the imperial family, as well as others of his remote descendants who have gained his favour, is that of king: but a Chinese king is a very different personage to those who bear the title in Europe. He is merely the highest nobleman in the empire, with as many subjects as the emperor condescends to grant; and who are frequently mere attendants, honoured with the name of slaves. And the title is merely nominal; for when they attend upon the emperor, they are considered only servants. As for their power, it is a mere shadow; it does not extend beyond their household, and even within those limits they are not allowed to inflict capital punishment. And then their incomes are contemptible, compared with their titles: these are subject to the emperor's bounty, and they are never sufficient to enable them to exhibit regal pageantry. The guard of honour allowed them, in truth, consists only of twenty persons.

These kings, as well as the higher ranks of nobility, follow in the train of the emperor on all solemn occasions: at sacrifices they are always present: and when the emperor gives audience to great multitudes, they crouch before him. They likewise perform the sacrificial rites, as proxies of the emperor, as well as the duties of sentinels at the palace. He surrounds himself with them, in order to ensure their fidelity, and, consequently, his own safety; deeming the ties of blood his best safeguard.

The treatment which these kings receive occasionally, sufficiently shows their degraded state. If they commit any crime, they are bastinadoed, loaded with chains like a common criminal, fined, and disgraced. Sometimes, indeed, their names are changed into ignominious epithets, their property confiscated, and they are sent into banishment, where mortification and incessant grief not unfrequently bring them down to the grave. All this is done by the law; and however unjust their condemnation may be, there is no appeal. Hence, to escape such punishment, many among the descendants of "Heaven's son," feign stupidity and carelessness, as Brutus did, in the times of the corrupted Roman commonwealth.

The princesses of the blood are still less favoured than the princes. The only education they receive is in the harem, where they become versed in all the intrigues of the eunuchs. A small pittance only is allowed them; and when they are married, the emperor bestows upon them a dowry, consisting of a few pieces of silk, and

some hundred taëls. Their partners are provided by the court; and they are sacrificed to the policy of the court. Frequently, without any regard to their feelings, their hand is bestowed upon Mongol chiefs, by which means the Chinese court either is, or hopes to be, made acquainted with the affairs of that hostile race. A strong bulwark is therefore formed against Mongol invasion. And yet, notwithstanding the Chinese emperor expects his daughters still to show filial duty towards his "sacred person," he pays no regard to their affection. When they are once sent to the desert, severe laws prevent their return to the capital, lest they should occasion expense, and leave their duties of espionage unfulfilled.

This conduct of the emperor of China towards his offspring exhibits the evils of polygamy in its clearest light. By it the stream of natural affection, the great solace of a parent's life, seems dried up. It even puts a sword into his hand to slay the children born unto him; or, at least, converts him into a persecutor: for the whole imperial family seems to be looked upon by him as so many slaves, born to do his will, and wait his bidding. Even the natural affection of their hearts is blighted in the bud. They would love, as nature would dictate; but the cold treatment they receive repels their affections. The branch thereby is severed from the root, and the unlovely spectacle of the father arrayed against the son, and the son against the father, is presented to the

* The value of a taël in English money is six shillings and a fraction.

world. Such are the unhallowed fruits of paganism.

THE NOBILITY.

Nominally the Chinese constitution maintains the following privileged classes: the privilege of imperial blood; of long service; of illustrious actions; of talent and wisdom; of great abilities; of zeal and assiduity; of nobility and of birth. The privilege of the first of these classes belongs to those who are descended from the same ancestor as the emperor; those who are of the emperor's mother and grandmother, within four degrees; those who are of the empress within three degrees; and those who are of the consort of the heir apparent, within two degrees. The second and third classes are intended for faithful servants of the state, both civil and military; the fourth, fifth, and sixth classes for civilians, and the literati, including those mandarins who excel in administration; the seventh comprehends the nobility; and the eighth the sons of meritorious officers.

.. By this the reader will learn in what light the Chinese view nobility. Merit, for the most part, takes the precedence of birth; and if this were carried out, the arrangement would be excellent. Unfortunately, however, this arrangement of nobility by the Chinese constitution is but theoretical; for it happens that the vicious are frequently exalted, while merit goes unrewarded. The payment of a sum of money is made to pass for an illustrious action, and the basest intrigue for consummate wisdom. Hence the rule laid down by law regarding nobility becomes a dead letter. It makes out its patent excellently well, but the

dispensers of the law, some cases excepted, put it into the hands of the wrong person. At the same time, the mere idea of merit being rewarded is sufficient to excite emulation in the breasts of those orders of people who are open to rewards, and sometimes they gain the prize.

Before the conquest of the Mantchoos there were only five degrees of nobility in China. The Mantchoos added four others, each of the first six being subdivided into four, and the seventh into two divisions, so that the whole consists of twenty-seven ranks. The first five of these answer to the titles of dukes, counts, barons, baronets, and knights in Europe; but for the others there are no corresponding expressions. The first two orders rank above mandarins, even of the highest degree; the others, which are the more profusely bestowed, are less valuable to the possessor. Every title decreases with the death of the possessor, the first-born only receiving them, until they become extinct.

There is an hereditary nobility existing in China far more ancient than that of any other nation. Some date their titles back as far as the fabulous ages of Yaou and Shun; while others, more correctly, derive theirs from Confucius and other Chinese worthies. The emperors, in whose time they lived, foreseeing the benefits arising to the country from the doctrines taught by these sages, assigned to them hereditary offices, which have ever since been held by their posterity. When it is considered that this homage has been paid to genius and worth by the varied dynasties which have swayed the empire, whether natives or barbarians, it becomes a subject for admiration.

By this it will be seen that the Chinese, in their predilection for honours carry their taste to the extreme point of absurdity. The emperor ennobles, or pretends to ennoble, even those persons who have long departed. Thus, if an officer has deserved well of his country, he makes out a patent of nobility extending to the second, third, or fourth generation of his ancestors ! Various titles are also conferred upon meritorious officers who have left the world. They are created governors, presidents, overseers, etc., in the cold shades of death. But this must be looked upon as a trick of state to obtain money. The wealthy and deluded Chinese, anxious for the welfare and honour of their deceased relatives, frequently come forward and purchase what may be termed their canonization. They buy the various ranks which the emperor pretends to have at his disposal ; and as soon as the patent is put into their hands, they rest satisfied that their ancestors are ennobled. This is one of the strangest delusions unfolded in the page of history : it may, indeed, be looked upon as a counterpart to that delusion which the Romish church palms upon Christendom concerning souls in purgatory. The one asks money for the honour of the dead, the other for their happiness !

The imperial favour extends beyond the confines of China. Those titles which he bestows upon princes of the blood are also bestowed upon Mongol princes and chieftains ; and to those who have married a princess of the imperial house he has the power of granting two other titles, denoting the highest rank ; namely, Khan, and Tappoo-nang, of which there are four degrees.

Among the Turkomans, also, he confers the title of Begs, and Akim Begs;* and in Tibet, the national titles of Tae-fun, Te-pa, and Kan-poo.

The nations which thus submit to the emperor of China, by placing their ancient and national honours in his hands, are virtually united to the empire. Alike with the mandarins, their nobility pay court to him, and receive his orders in the same haughty tone. This is the natural effect of his assumption. Setting aside the idea of his power, the very fact of his possessing the right of bestowing honours, which he does with a lavish hand, is sufficient to ensure their willing obedience. Hence it is that so many barbarian chieftains, as well as the mass of the native Chinese, bow submissively at the foot of his throne. The distribution of imperial favours being so abundant, all are led to look up to the proud ruler of China with affection and reverence, which even haughty airs and rough usage cannot diminish. It is so deep-rooted in their hearts, that it partakes of the nature of slavish servility.

THE IMPERIAL HOUSEHOLD ESTABLISHMENT.

This division of the emperor of China's court consists of his body guard, which is quartered within the precincts of the imperial city, and at the parks of Jebol, Yuen-ming-yuen, and Mouk-den; of a pastoral establishment, called King-fung-sze, placed in luxuriant meadows beyond the great wall of China, where immense droves of large and small cattle are fed, partly for his own use, and partly for sacrificial purposes; of an

* This was a native honorary appellation; but it is not now acknowledged, unless conferred by the Chinese emperor.

arsenal, called Woo-pe-yuen, where his armour and weapons are kept, with all the tents and baggage necessary for a campaign; of the Shang-sze-yuen, a board charged with the care of the imperial steeds; of the Kwang-choo-sze, where all the riches designed for the emperor's particular use are preserved under a court of officers; of the Ying-tsaou-sze, an office charged with the repair of the buildings, maintaining numerous artisans, and providing the coals and fuel requisite for the kitchen; of the Tung-shin-yuen, a board of officers who have the care of the gardens and parks of the emperor; of the Chang-e-sze, an office which regulates his domestic establishment; of the Shing-hing-sze, a particular office for the punishment of the inmates of the inner palace, for trifling derelictions of duty; of a medical establishment, for the benefit of the ladies in the harem; of the Lwan-e-wei, a court which keeps the travelling equipages in order; and the Tae-puh-she, which provides the necessary horses and camels for the emperor when he proceeds on his hunting excursions.

The number of individuals employed in these various departments of the emperor of China's household establishment is immense. The officers employed in them are of various ranks, from the nobleman downwards. The superior officers are frequently the personal friends of the emperor; and though their salary may be trifling, an office in the imperial household establishment is a sure step to higher preferments in other departments. Most of the governor-generals, and presidents of the supreme boards, have indeed passed through them to their present position. While serving in

the palace they learned to court the favour of their master, and thus ensured their further exaltation.

Apart from the various offices described in the imperial household establishment, or, as it is called in Chinese, the Nuy-woo-foo, there exists a corps of five hundred and seventy men, denominated Ling-she-wei-foo, instituted for the protection of the emperor. This corps is divided into four classes, and is placed under the command of a Nuy-ta-chin, or great minister of the interior; and the soldiers of which it is composed are the descendants of the bravest Mantchoos who subverted the throne of China. The commanders of the corps are relations of the emperor, and are on terms of great intimacy with him. But this is, perhaps, chiefly owing to their proximity to his person; for they, with those under them, not only stand sentinel at his apartment, but also take care of his household. Probably, no class of persons in China are more open to preferment than these Mantchoo defenders of the throne. Several of them hold the ranks of general and lieutenant-general, while others have been sent abroad into the provinces as civilians; and many are even ministers of the cabinet.

SACRIFICIAL ESTABLISHMENTS.

The religion of the state in China consists of mere ceremonies, and ecclesiastical establishments are instituted solely for their observance. These are, 1. The Tae-chang-sze, the members of which have to announce to the emperor that on such a day a festival is to take place, and to prepare the sacrificial animals, as well as to receive the emperor, or his proxy, on the day of ceremony.

2. The Hung-loo-sze, the members of which attend as masters of ceremony on court days, as well as at sacrifices, and give the word of command, "Kneel!" "Prostrate!" "Rise!" 3. The Kwang-luh-sze, who are charged with the cooking of the flesh of the sacrifices, and arranging the imperial banquet given to the Mongol princes and foreign ambassadors.

The worship of the emperor consists in a recitation of a form of prayer, written upon a board, and read with a loud voice by a member of the Tae-chang-sze. The subjoined is a specimen:—

"The rightful successor of Heaven's son, your minister, dares to announce to illustrious Heaven, the Supreme Ruler, that he has received the imperial decree of nourishing the people in this sublunary sphere. He thinks profoundly upon the country's welfare. Sowing and harvest are subject to difficulties, and upon them the sustenance of the people depends: he therefore hopes that Heaven will grant rain in due season. Availing himself of this lucky day, he spreads out his sacrifice in public. Whilst the dragon's eyes are upon him, he utters his annual prayer. May the August and Supreme Ruler behold this repast, which is sincerely presented! May he grant tranquillity to the millions of people, bestow splendid gifts upon all, and vouchsafe the five winds and ten rains, that there may be millet and corn, as well as the five kinds of grain! Thus these three kinds of agriculture will flourish."

The sacrifice which the emperor of China spreads before the altar is very costly. The sacrificial animals amount annually to 240 cows, 439 sheep and goats, 339 pigs, 405 stags, and 449 hares.

Divers soups and dishes are also prepared and presented to the idols, and gold and silver paper is burned before them in great abundance. It has been calculated, indeed, that the institutions for the service of the one true God in other countries do not cost more than one-eighth part of the sum which the emperor of China pays for idolatry. The gold and silver paper consumed in wanton waste before his idols alone, costs a hundred times more, Mr. Gutzlaff says, than all the money expended for Bibles, tracts, and missionary societies! This is a humbling consideration for the Christian world.

LITERARY ESTABLISHMENTS.

It is maintained by the Chinese, that their nation is the only civilized nation on earth, and that it is destined to transform the whole world. Looking at this vaunt, one might expect to find literary institutions in every nook of the empire, and to learn that its emperors were the constant and munificent patrons of learning. The history of many emperors declares, indeed, that they sedulously cultivated literature; but the actual condition of learning in China proves such a declaration to be a mere oriental hyperbole. Compared with the various courts for the maintenance of rites and ceremonies, the learned institutions of China sink into insignificance. Those connected with the court resolve themselves into three only; namely, the Kwō-tsze-keen, or national institute; the Kin-teën-keën, or astronomical board; and the Tae-e-yuen, or medical board; and even these are conducted in such a manner, and are so miserably deficient in sound

learning, as might make a European curl the lip of scorn, and apply to their students generally the insulting epithet of "Tyro." What, then, becomes of the boast of the Chinese, that they will one day transform the world? Some few great men have appeared amongst them: the minds of the mass are weakened and debased by their gross superstitions.

The Kwō-tsze-keen, or national institute, is an establishment for the education of the sons of officers and noble Mantchoos. They are educated at the public expense, and are instructed in the Chinese, Mongol, and Mantchoo languages. Beyond this they learn very little; and when they have passed the requisite examinations, they are either sent to the high tribunals, or to the provinces, to serve as clerks, till they receive further promotion. This is the general rule; but some pupils, who exhibit great aptitude for learning, are educated for the astronomical board, and learn the elements of mathematics.

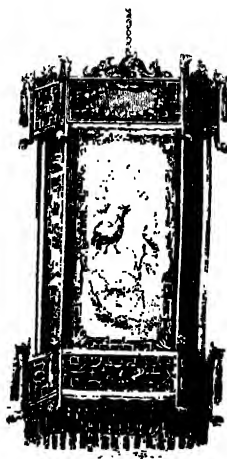
The Kin-teën-keën, or astronomical board, belonging to the court of China, has been greatly celebrated by the Jesuits, who were admitted members of it, and who raised it to its present state. In it there are employed, one great minister, 190 mandarins, with a host of pupils and clerks. Their principal duties are, to notify to the emperor the day, hour, and part of the heavens in which an eclipse is to happen, and to prepare a calendar. Of late years, they have been enabled to do this with tolerable accuracy; but only a few are engaged in astronomical labours, or understand the science. Most of them are employed in astrological observations, and

foretelling future events ; or, in other words, in imposing in various ways upon the credulity of the emperor and his court.

The Tae-e-yuen, or medical board, consists of three presidents, fifteen imperial physicians, thirty assistants, forty secondary doctors, with several pupils and apothecaries. The duties of these are self-evident. They are supported for the service of the imperial palace ; but it frequently happens that some of the physicians are sent to Mongolia, in order to visit a sick princess. The skill which they display in the healing art is of a questionable nature ; or, if they possess such, it is scarcely made available. Law forbids them to follow their own judgment in preparing medicines. Whatever may be the nature and stage of the complaint, they must prescribe and prepare the drugs according to established rules. This, perhaps, is one of the strongest proofs that could be adduced of the unchanging manners of oriental nations. What they were of old, that they are now ; and it is no stretch of imagination to affirm likewise, that they will bear the same resemblance in future years. They may be modified, but never obliterated.

Such is the emperor, and such the court of China. To a Christian, the picture affords a sad theme for his contemplation. In it he beholds one man proudly lording it over millions of subjects with a high hand ; and that not only as regards their bodies, but their souls. In the crouching form of the one, the debasing condition of the other is seen. All the best faculties are prostrated beneath his withering sway. In vain are edicts issued breathing paternal love for them. "All is false and hollow." Like the priests of the

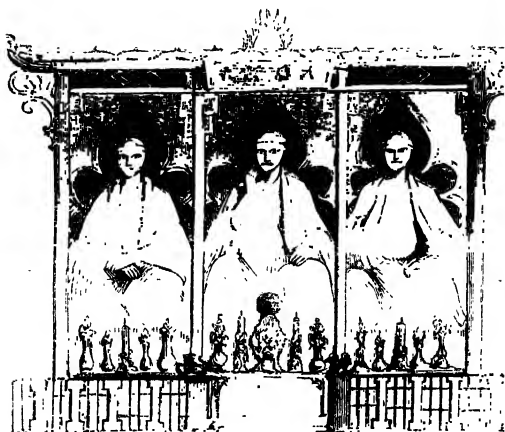
gracles of antiquity, who secretly laughed at the credulous multitude bowing at their shrines, the emperor of China, doubtless, sits in his imperial palace, and laughs at the credulity of his subjects, who bow before him as a god. He knows and feels his own mortality; and when he issues his assumptive dogmas, he cannot but ask himself this question, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?" But the time is hastening onward, when the flimsy web he has weaved, all covered as it is with the dust of antiquity, shall be removed!



CHINESE LANTERN

CHAPTER III.

THE RELIGION OF THE CHINESE.



THE TRIAD OF BUDHA.

THE tendency of man to idolatry is shown by the history of all nations. The most intelligent of the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, alike bowed the knee to idols made of wood and stone. Nor is there any occasion to revert to the nations of antiquity for a confirmation of this appalling fact. Our own forefathers, what were they but idolaters? India and China, also, exhibit millions of

human beings, who, having no knowledge of the God that made them, and the Saviour who died on the cross for the salvation of sinners, make them graven images, and falling down before them, pray unto them, and say individually, "Deliver me, for thou art my god !"

There are facts in the history of China which prove that the Chinese did not arrive at this state of utter degradation all at once. Like the nations of antiquity, they only reached it by slow degrees. Its first inhabitants imparted to their children, and their posterity through them, for several ages, some proper sentiments concerning the Supreme Being. They taught them to fear and honour Him as the Sovereign Lord of the universe. Traces of this are discerned in the five canonical works called King, of each of which Confucius was either the author or compiler, and which the Chinese look upon as the source of all their science and morality. Thus in one of these works (the Shoo-king) Tien, or the Deity, is called the Father of the people, independent, almighty; and a Being who knows the most hidden things, even the secrets of the heart. He is also there represented as watching over the government of the universe, so that no event can happen but by his command; as holy; as pleased with human virtues; as superlatively just; and as punishing wickedness in the most signal manner, and even in kings, whom he deposeth, setting up others in their room, according to his pleasure. It is likewise there said that he dispenses public calamities, as warnings for repentance, and that repentance is followed by acts of mercy and goodness.

The remote ancestors of the Chinese derived some information from the immediate descendants of Noah; but the influence of knowledge thus obtained was vague and transitory. Hence, like the ancient Egyptians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Babylonians, Phenicians, Greeks, and many other ancient nations, the Chinese, in the lapse of time, forsook the worship of Tien, or the Deity, and bowed in homage to the visible material heaven. Sun, moon, and stars, were worshipped by them, instead of Him whose hands had created them, and whose will appointed their destined courses. This was the first great step in their downward path of moral turpitude, and having taken it, it led to another still more fatal in its results. They next worshipped inferior spirits, whom they supposed to depend on a Supreme Being, and who presided over cities, rivers, mountains, kingdoms, provinces, and particular persons, and nearly answered to the demons and genii of the Greeks and Romans. Having gone thus far, they were unable to retrace their steps, or to halt in their downward career. Step after step was taken, until they reached that depth of degrading superstition in which they have now for ages been sunk.

The religion of China, as it exists, and has for a long time existed, is three-fold; first, there is the religion of the state; secondly, Taouism; and thirdly, Budhuism. In order that the reader may clearly understand the religious state of that vast empire, these are described under their separate heads.

SECTION I.—THE RELIGION OF THE STATE.

Ancient Chinese legislators appear to have thought, that unless they had power over the minds of men, they could not control their bodies. For this purpose, they invented a religious system which delegated to their rulers all power upon earth; a system which raised them to the rank of mediators between Heaven and their subjects, and which identified them with ideal spirits, demons, gods, and invisible powers. By it, indeed, they were made the representatives of the people, for whom it was asserted they could pray down blessings from on high.

This system, as might be supposed, was not promulgated or imposed upon the credulity of the people abruptly. It was gradually unfolded, lest common sense should be shocked, and it should thereby meet with such opposition as would have prevented its establishment. The designing usually work slowly and secretly, and thus these Chinese legislators proceeded. Hence they were successful in palming this religious system upon the multitude, and thereby triumphed over all obstacles. And the religious rites they established exist, notwithstanding a change of opinion has taken place in the minds of the higher classes, through the exertions of philosophers, from the period of the Sung dynasty downwards. In vain does their scepticism strike at the root of superstition; the mass of the people still sit under its wide-spread branches. Even the very philosophers themselves, and their warmest adherents, who see and know the frivolity of all

existing creeds in China, when sickness and sufferings come upon them, have recourse to a despised priest of Budhu, and follow the most ridiculous directions, in order to appease a guilty conscience. They would destroy superstition, but having no better creed to bring forward as a substitute, they are yet compelled to submit to its directions. Alike with the priests of China, therefore, they are blind leaders of the blind; and it cannot but follow that all are engulfed in the vortex of error.

The religious rites established by Chinese legislators are watched over by the Le-poo, or tribunal of rites, with an eye as jealous as that of a Romish inquisitor. All innovations are violently resisted, whence no change has taken place since the period of their complete establishment.

The catalogue of the canonical objects of adoration amongst the Chinese rulers is truly appalling. Among them may be enumerated Teën, or heaven; Te, earth; the ancestors of the existing dynasty; the sun and moon; the gods of the land; Confucius; Shin-nung, the inventor of agriculture; the ancestors of the ancient dynasties; the inventor of silk; the spirits of heaven; the gods of the earth; the god of the passing year; the worthies of antiquity; the stars, clouds, wind, rain; the ocean, rivers, hills, streams; five mountains upon which the ancients sacrificed; flags; roads; gods of the cannon, gate, and soil; the north pole; the north star; the gods of some hills; with a great variety of others, to which a number is being continually added. Every year objects of worship are increased, so that the deities of

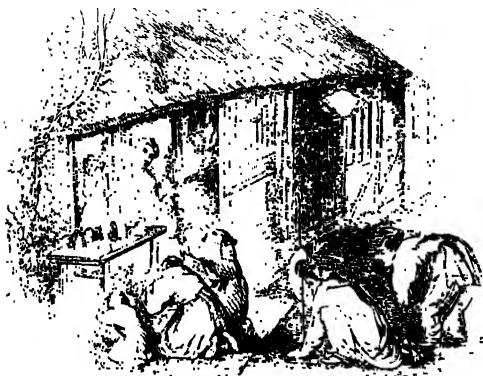
China provoke a comparison with those of Greece, of whom no one, in the end, could undertake to say "how many there were not."

The regulation of the order of deities rests with the emperor of China. He it is who exalts or degrades, canonizes or excommunicates, according to the merits or demerits of the parties. He himself ranks high among them, for only heaven, earth, and his deceased ancestors are deemed his superiors. The rest are more or less inferior to the monarch, and he can strike such off the catalogue of divinities as he pleases. The proper rank of idols is strictly observed in every temple: for if a mandarin lodges in a temple where there are images below his rank, he may order them to be removed; but they consider that a mandarin has no power to confer divine honours: that rests solely with the emperor.

By this it will be seen, that the religion of state in China enjoins the worship of numberless imposing visible objects, thereby confounding the universe with the supreme God. It also fills all parts of the world with genii, demons, spirits, or deceased mortals, to whom the control of some part of the world is assigned. But these are not exactly deities; they are looked upon only as rulers and governors of the universe, under the sway of the emperor, who can dictate laws to them, and punish them if they do not obey those laws.

A prominent feature in the religion of the Chinese, whether of the state or individuals, is the worship of the dead. The emperor and the peasant alike bow down before the shades of their ancestors. Such are idols of the first order; and

whatever duty may be forgotten, this is surely remembered. To neglect it would be to gain a character for impiety, which neither personal virtues nor time could obliterate.



The various deities of China are variously represented. Some are recognised by altars in a series of steps, like the tower of Babel; and others by temples, images, and pictures. The images are in general made of clay, and gilt, those of brass being in disrepute. The country abounds with temples, which either belong to the government, or to the 'Taou and Budhu sects. Those in Peking appear to be the most celebrated, but there is a great uniformity in their construction throughout the empire. The largest consist of a row of buildings with intervening court-yards. All of them have one large hall, to which a few steps lead; and when that is gained the visitor

beholds an idol placed upon an altar, resembling a table, walls daubed with historical paintings, and a roof adorned with dragons and griffins, after the manner of the mystic cells of Egypt.

This feature of the Chinese temples will also serve to remind the reader of the "chambers of imagery," described by the prophet Ezekiel, as chambers wherein "every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, were portrayed upon the wall round about."* The "chambers of imagery" erected by the idolatrous Hebrews were evidently formed from a model supplied by the Egyptians; and it may be a question, whether the Chinese derived their ideas for the paintings which adorn the interior of their temples from the same source, or from their own corrupt imagination. But, whichever it may be, the facts exhibit the universality of the corruption of the human heart in the most glowing colours. It testifies of the truth which the psalmist uttered, in holy indignation, when contemplating the apostasy of man in the aggregate :—

"They are all gone aside,

They are altogether become filthy:

There is none that doeth good, no, not one."

PSA. xiv. 3.

The splendour of some of the temples in China is said to be very striking. This is more especially the case with the Teën-tân, or celestial altar, which is a mound of earth built in terraces, and made to represent the firmament. Similar monuments are erected in honour of "mother earth;" but they do not vie in splendour with the Teën-tân,

and none are equal to the gorgeousness of the palaces. When the object of worship is presumed to be like a man, the oblations which the Chinese offer at their shrines consist of various kinds of edibles. These are presented amidst the fumes of incense, the effulgence of tapers, or the lighted tinsel, and the sound of the gong ; all which they suppose to be essential in order to propitiate their deities. The model after which all altars are made, is a large censer in the middle of a table with an urn on each side. These vessels are, for the most part, made of pewter, and somewhat resemble European ornaments on chimney-pieces. Incense sticks are stuck into the censer, and as they waste they deposit their ashes around in the hollow of the censer.

In the state religion all sacrifices are either offered by the emperor himself or by his deputies, who are either ministers of state or members of the *Le-poo*. When the ceremony takes place every one appears in his state robes, which differ in colour according to the object of worship. For instance, when the material heaven is worshipped, the robes are azure ; when the earth, yellow ; the sun, red ; and the moon, a pale white. Their very altars are also shaped according to the notion which the Chinese have of their object of worship. Thus, the earth being considered by them as having right angles, the altar dedicated to the earth is made square likewise. Every thing, indeed, belonging to the Chinese temples is fabricated according to rule. The dimensions are given, and they must be strictly executed according to the pattern.

It has been seen, in the article on the Chinese

Court, that various officers are maintained for the purpose of feeding the sacred animals, and preparing the offerings. These offerings consist of three kinds, according to the rank or sanctity of the idol. They are prepared the day before, and are presented with a variety of fruits and cakes, which are publicly exhibited for a while, and are then consumed by the assistants. Like the priests of Bel and the Dragon, the Chinese priests prepare the meat for their idols, but come in at a side-door and eat it themselves, making their hearts right merry over the credulity of the worshippers.

It would be tedious to dwell on the numberless festivals observed by the Chinese state. At every new moon, and the change of the season, they take place; and they are generally made seasons of mirth and merriment. One example must suffice, that of the emperor's ploughing the sacred field.

This festival takes place when the sun enters the fifteenth degree of Aquarius. It is not, however, performed till the astrologers have consulted the stars, and discovered a propitious day. This done, the ceremonial is forwarded to the emperor, who, after nominally fasting for three days, informs his ancestors, by proxy, what he is going to do, and solicits their approbation. This is granted as a matter of course—for the dead cannot oppose the proceedings of the living; and then the emperor sets out, accompanied by the highest officers of state, for the altar erected in honour of "mother earth." Here he offers sacrifices, and reads the formula of prayer; and then he proceeds to the sacred field, which lies to the south of Peking, where he grasps the plough, and

turns up a few furrows. The princes of the blood then follow his example ; and the emperor next sows the five kinds of grains—rice, wheat, pulse, millet, and Barbadoes millet ; after which he partakes of a repast under tents erected for his reception.

On the following day, about eighty peasants are deputed to finish the ploughing of the sacred field, and in due time the governor of Peking repairs to the spot, and reports on the success of their mutual labours. If he can discover any extraordinary ear, or luxuriant blade, he reports this to the emperor, and predicts a good harvest throughout the empire. When the harvest is gathered in, the grain of the sacred field is carefully stored in a separate granary, and used only for sacrifices.

A similar ceremony to the above takes place throughout the provinces under the direction of the various governors, who act as so many proxies of the emperor. To neglect it would be to incur general censure ; for the success of agriculture is supposed to depend upon its strict performance. Notwithstanding, the body of the people take very little part in this or any other festival, except that of the New Year's-day, which may be deemed a day of national, civil, and religious rejoicing. Then the Chinese generally, who have toiled throughout the year without cessation, having no sabbath or appointed day of rest, eschew all labour, and give themselves up to feasting and revelry. In the palace, the villa, and the cottagē, alike, after their inmates have been to the temples to inquire their fate for the coming year, excess in eating and drinking takes place, whilst jugglers, play actors, and the representatives of

the great dragon, amuse the populace with their soul-degrading tricks.

Beside the above festivals, there are others of almost equal celebrity. There are the *Leih-chun*, which takes place at the commencement of the spring, and which continues for ten days ; the *Shae-tang*, or festival of the lanterns ; the *T'oo-te-tun*, or the birthday of the familiar gods of the city ; the *Tsing-ming-tsee*, or feast of the tombs at Moukden, which is now falling into disuse ; the *Chung-yang*, a festival celebrated in honour of the ascension of the god of the north ; the festivals of the births of Budhu, of the god of the sea, and Kwan-yin, the goddess of mercy ; and the festivals of Heun-tan, the chief of the spirits of Teén-how, the queen of heaven and goddess of the sea ; of Shing-moa, or holy mother ; of the god of the central mount ; of Kin-hwa, the goddess of childbirth ; of Yo-wang, king of medicine ; of the god of the south pole, of the god of thunder, with others ; as well as minor festivals : amongst which, the anniversary of the builder of cities, and the birthdays of the heavenly spirits, hold the first rank.

The birthdays of the emperor and empress, as well as the anniversaries of their deaths, are celebrated exclusively by mandarins. On the anniversary of the birthday of the empress, a proclamation is circulated throughout the empire, and posted up in all streets and public places. This proclamation contains an account of the imperial favours which the emperor intends to bestow on the natal day of the empress ; of the blessings which her reign has bestowed upon the empire ; and of the virtues which she possesses. The section relating to her virtues, which was issued

in the proclamation on the occasion of the empress-mother attaining her sixtieth year, in 1825, is subjoined :—

“ Her majesty, the great empress, benign and dignified, universally beneficent, perfectly serene, extensively benevolent, composed and placid, thoroughly virtuous, tranquil and self-collected, in favours unbounded—who in virtue is the equal of the exalted and expansive heavens, and in goodness of the vast and solid earth—has within her perfumed palaces aided the renovating endeavours of his late majesty, rendering the seasons ever harmonious, and in her maternal court has afforded a bright rule of government. She has planted for herself a glorious name in all the palace, which she will leave to her descendants; and has imparted her sustaining favours to the empire, making her tender affection universally conspicuous. Hence genial influence abides within the palace of everlasting delight and joy, and congratulation meets in the halls of eternal spring.”

The force of oriental hyperbole could go no further than this, for it reaches the very height of blasphemy. Not satisfied with divine honours himself, the emperor enjoins them to be paid to his relations, for he associates them with him in the great work of renovating nature. How deep-rooted must the superstition of that people be, who can listen to and receive such sentiments as truths—who can submit to the yoke of a religion which not only commands the adoration of idols and saints, but their rulers. The mind can form, indeed, but a faint idea of the superstition which pervades all classes in China, from the emperor down to the meanest peasant. Although rational

in mutual intercourse, the populace are subject to the wildest imaginations and folly. Though they deem themselves superior to demons and spirits, yet they are constantly engaged in wars with imps and elfs, by whom they suppose themselves to be surrounded and persecuted. All their actions are supposed to be controlled by an unalterable fate. The revolving universe, say they, brings every thing to an issue ; and man, who is but a particle of the whole, cannot escape its iron decrees. Here, indeed, superstition deceives millions, and plunges them in imperishable wretchedness.

This latter sentence will receive illustration by an examination of the classical or sacred works written by Confucius and his disciples, and which constitute at this day the standard of Chinese orthodoxy. These works consist, in all, of nine ; that is, the "Four Books," and the "Five Canonical Works."

The four Books are entitled, the Ta-heo, the Choong-yoong, the Lun-yu, and the Book of Mencius.

The Ta-heo.—The Ta-heo has been rendered by the Jesuits "The School of Adults," meaning literally, "the study of grown persons." The first section of it is ascribed to Confucius, and the remaining ten to his principal disciple. Its end and aim are evidently political ; and morals are represented as the foundation of politics. How to attain morality, however, seems to have been unknown to the philosophers. Thus, for instance, "the beauty of virtue" is inculcated somewhat in the manner of the stoics of old, and its practice recommended as a species of

enjoyment. The philosophers saw that virtue was preferable to vice, even in this world, but they could not teach mankind how to walk in its paths. Notwithstanding, this book contains many wise remarks, and rules for individual improvement, the regulation of a family, the government of a state, and the rule of an empire. One striking example may be adduced ; "He who gains the hearts of the people, secures the throne ; and he who loses the people's hearts, loses the throne." These are self-evident truths, and probably they may have had some little effect on the administration of the Chinese government.

The Choong-yoong.—The title of this book signifies the "Infallible Medium." In it man is taught to be always moderate in whatever vicissitudes he is called upon to undergo : never to be haughty if rich and great, nor base if poor. Generally, it serves to expound the ideas of the Chinese philosophers respecting the nature of human virtue, which ideas are crude and unsatisfactory. Contrary to all human experience, and in opposition to the doctrines of the Bible, which teach that the heart of man is only evil from his youth, they consider that the nature of man is originally pure, and that it becomes vitiated only by the force of example, and by being soiled with "the dust of the world." "Evil communications" certainly "corrupt good manners ;" but it is equally true, that

"Soon as we draw our infant breath,
The seeds of sin grow up for death."

This great truth seems to have been known even by the ancient heathen ; for Horace des-

canting on the corruption of mankind, which he represents as universal, says—

“ And lo! the eye of Jove, that all things knows,
Can when he will the heart of man disclose;
Open the guilty bosom all within,
And trace the infant thoughts of future sin.”

The Chinese usually divide man into three great classes, thus :—The *shing*, who are wise or virtuous independently of instruction ; the *hien*, who become moral by the aid of study and application ; and the *yu*, who are, in spite of all instruction, vicious or worthless. Such a triplicate classification of mankind, however, does not seem to belong exclusively to the Chinese, for the traces of it are distinctly discovered in the works of the poet above quoted. He says—

“ Far does that man all other men excel,
Who, from his wisdom, thinks in all things well ;
Wisely considering, to himself a friend,
All for the present best, and for the end.
Nor is the man without his share of praise,
Who well the dictates of the wise obeys ;
But he that is not wise himself, nor can
Hearken to wisdom is a worthless man.”

In this extract the very germ of the Chinese sentiment concerning the division of mankind is found ; and it is probable that the philosophers of China derived it from the very same source as Horace, namely, knowledge handed down from the early recipients of revealed truth.

The Lun-yu.—This work consists of the conversations or sayings of Confucius, together with the most remarkable actions of his life. It has been aptly termed a “complete Chinese Boswell ;” for the same submissive reverence towards

the philosopher, and the same display of self-devotion in erecting the fabric of his greatness, is discerned in the one as in the other. The following is a specimen of its style. Being asked by a disciple to define the man of superior virtue, Confucius replied, "He knows neither sorrow nor fear." Surprised at such an answer, the other asked again, "Does that alone constitute the character?" The sage rejoined, "If a man search within, and finds nothing wrong, need he have either sorrow or fear?" This sentiment of the Chinese philosopher is nothing more than the sentiment which Horace breathes in his flowery verse, thus—

"Is there a man whom incorrupt we call,
Who sits alike unprejudiced to all?
By him the city flourishes in peace,
Her borders lengthen, and her sons increase;
From him far-seeing Jove will drive afar
All civil discord and the rage of war.
No days of famine to the righteous fall,
But all is plenty, and delightful all;
Nature indulgent o'er the land is seen,
With oaks high towering are their mountains green;
With heavy masts their arms diffusive bow,
While from their trunks rich streams of honey flow;
Of flocks untainted are their pastures full,
Which slowly strut beneath their weight of wool;
And sons are born the likeness of their sire,
The fruits of virtue and a chaste desire:
O'er the wide seas for wealth they need not roam,
Many and lasting are their joys at home."

Such sentiments as these are, indeed, to be met with in the writings of every age and country; and they abound, unmixed with any heathenish alloy, in the Sacred Writings, and especially

in the book of Proverbs, of which the following is a notable example :—

“ The wicked flee when no man pursueth ;
But the righteous are bold as a lion.”

PROV. xxviii. 1.

The most remarkable passage in the Lun-yu is the following :—Being asked if any one word could express a rule for the conduct of one's life, he answered, “ Will not the word *shoo* serve ?” And he explained this by the sentiment, “ Do unto others as you would wish them to do unto you.” Our Saviour's golden rule will be noticed as of similar import ; but he added that benevolent injunction, “ I say unto you, Love your enemies”—a standard to which heathenism could not attain.

The Lun-yu consists, in all, of twenty chapters, divided into two equal parts ; the *Shang* and *Hua* or “ first” and “ second.” Its maxims turn chiefly upon public and private conduct, or morals and politics ; the latter, as in all the other canonical works, preponderating. Confucius and his disciples may, indeed, be termed political, rather than moral teachers. The great end of the life of man seems to have been considered by them, either to rule or to obey ; and the morals they taught were either directly or indirectly made subservient to that purpose. Thus one precept of the sage reads :—“ The father may conceal the faults of his son, and the son those of the father ; virtue consists in this.” On this sentiment, one of the provisions of the penal code of China is founded ; it runs thus :—“ Children, near relations, and dependants, shall not be punishable for concealing the faults of those with whom they dwell.” While Confucius and his followers,

however, strictly enjoined implicit respect and obedience to existing governments and institutions, and an observance of national usages and customs, they did not teach religious veneration towards any created thing. So far from this is the actual case, that they have shown that, even in veneration itself, there should be nothing of an idolatrous tendency. In this respect, therefore, they rose superior to their fellow countrymen. At the same time, they did not actually wage war against the prevailing systems of idolatry; and there was nothing in their works which tended to lower their "gods many and lords many," in the estimation of the people.

The Book of Mencius.—Mencius was a disciple of Confucius, to whom he is considered only second in point of wisdom. He lived about a century after his predecessor; and the great aim of his life was to illustrate and promote his doctrines. In the book which bears his name, his chief object is, to inculcate the one leading principle of Confucius—philanthropic government. In the Four Books, indeed, there is nothing more remarkable than the freedom with which these sages give advice to kings. Thus, in the sixth chapter of the Book of Mencius, in reply to a proposition from the emperor, that certain severe taxes should be only lightened this year, and abolished the next, this sentence occurs:—"This is like a man who should steal his neighbour's goods, and being censured, should answer, 'I will take so much less every month, and stop next year.' If you know that the tax is unjust, it should be instantly remitted." Then, again it is represented, that the hearts of the people are

only the legitimate foundations of empire, or permanent rule, under the following expressive figure:—"If, when with equal strength you invade a country, the people come to welcome you with supplies, can this be on any other account than because you are about to rescue them from fire and water? But if you deepen the water, and add fuel to the fire, they will turn from you."

How bold Mencius was in giving advice to kings, is illustrated by the first chapter of his book, which opens with a conversation between him and the king of the state, called Leang, who had usurped that title. When he invited the philosophers of the day to his court, Mencius went with the rest; and the king having thus accosted him, "I suppose you come to increase the gains of my court?" he replied, "Why speak of gain? benevolence and justice are all in all;" and he illustrated this, by showing, that if avarice universally existed, mutual strife and anarchy must be the inevitable consequence.

Such is the purport of the Four Books. While they teach some moral, and even great truths, they leave the heart of man universally unaffected. Like the writings of the Greek and Roman philosophers, they only tend to show that their sage authors were deeply convinced of the fact, that man needs Divine inspiration far superior to any that had hitherto been imparted.

This will more fully appear, by a view of the five canonical works called *King*, of each of which Confucius was either the author or compiler. These are entitled, the Sky-king, the

Shoo-king, the Ly-king, the Chun-tsieu, and the Yě-king.

The Sky-king.—The Sky-king is a book of sacred songs. It consists of about three hundred brief poems, selected by Confucius from a mass of rubbish handed down by antiquity, or supplied by his contemporaries. It is divided into four portions, of which the first is called Kuǒ-foong; or, “The manners of different states:” that is, of the states into which a portion of the empire, as it now exists, was then divided. The second and third parts are said to have been composed for the purpose of being sung on state occasions. They consist of pieces which treat of the virtuous actions of heroes and sages, or express their sentiments. The fourth portion of the work is composed of eulogies on the ancestors of the Chow dynasty, then filling the throne, and on the great personages of antiquity. These appear to have been a species of ode sung before the emperor, when he rendered sacrifices in the temples of Heaven and Earth, or in the hall of his revered ancestors.

The merits of this poetical canon are very questionable. Most of the songs and odes are of a very humble order; and taken with their commentary, which is very minute, their style and language are frequently unintelligible. It seems doubtful, indeed, whether they ever answered the end proposed, which is discovered in the following notion which the Chinese have of poetical language:—“The human feelings, when excited, become embodied in words; when words fail to express them, sighs or inarticulate tones

succeed ; when these are inadequate to do justice to feeling, then recourse is had to song." At all events, the poetry of the Sky-king falls very far short of poetical merit, when compared with the contemporaneous soul-stirring strains of the Greeks and Romans. These, in reality, were calculated to do "justice to feeling."

The Shoo-king.—The Shoo-king is a history of the deliberations between the two ancient emperors, Yaou and Shun, and some minor rulers. Like most of the other canonical works, it chiefly turns upon the art of good government. To this end, Confucius puts maxims into their mouths, which he quotes as models of perfection. Thus, for example, he makes them say :—"It is vain to expect that good government can proceed from vicious minds." Every notion of good government is, indeed, represented as founded on certain principles, good in themselves, and which, if observed, bring order, but if abandoned, anarchy.

It is in the Shoo-king that a notice of the deluge is discovered, as before noticed. See p. 3.

The Ly-king.—The Ly-king, or Book of Rites, is considered as the foundation of the present state of Chinese manners, and a chief cause of their unchangeableness. This seems very probable, for it carries out the leading principle of Chinese moralists and rulers ; namely, to subdue the passions, and reduce the mind to a state of torpor. The Ly-king contains directions for about three thousand ceremonial usages, and the tribunal of the Lepoo is charged with the guardianship and interpretation thereof. Hence they are made as unalterable as the laws of the Medes

and Persians, which were neither changed nor abrogated. This is a fearful fact; for the chains by which the minds of the Chinese are thereby manacled, are such as no human effort can shake off. The gospel, by its mighty power, can alone set them free.

The Chun-tsieu.—This work is a history of the times of Confucius, and is, strictly speaking, his only original work. Its chief object appears to have been to afford warning and examples to the rulers of the country; for in it he reproves their misgovernment, and inculcates the maxims of the “ancient kings, as unfolded at large in the Shoo-king for their guidance. It seems surprising that such maxims should have formed the groundwork of a mere Asiatic despotism—for such they are nominally—whether they were the emanations of the minds of the ancient kings, or Confucius himself. But the fact seems to be, that all the Chinese rulers, convinced of their wisdom, gladly adopted them for their guidance, though they generally eschewed their practice.

The Ye-king.—This work, as its title signifies, is a mystical exposition of what some consider an ancient theory of creation, and of the changes that are perpetually occurring in nature. It would be uninteresting to the reader to enter into its dry and unmeaning details at large, and therefore one example of the fallacies with which it abounds may serve for a sample of the whole. In the Ye-king, there are eight arithmetical diagrams, called “the diagrams of Fo-hy.” These bear some resemblance to the mystical numbers of the Greek philosopher Pythagoras, who allowed his speculations to be perverted by

dreams of mysterious virtue in certain numbers and combinations; for instance, the Ye-king speaks of the origin of all created things under the name of Tae-keih: and it is represented by a figure worked after this problem:—"On the semidiameter of a given circle describe a semicircle; and on the remaining semidiameter, but on the other side, describe another semicircle." This figure represents the Tae-keih; and the twice divided portions formed by the curved line typify the Yang and Yin, which bears a singular parallel to that extraordinary Egyptian fiction, the supposed intervention of a masculo-feminine principle in the development of the mundane egg: a fiction which found its way into Greece and India, where Bralhma is spoken of as emanating from a golden egg. Thus the Tae-keih is said to have produced the Yang and Yin; that is, the active and passive, or male and female principle; and these last to have produced all things. To illustrate this, it may be mentioned that they call heaven Yang, and the earth Yin; the sun Yang, and the moon Yin; and the supposed analogy is carried throughout creation. All animate and inanimate nature are distinguished by them into masculine and feminine. Even vegetable productions are made male and female; as, for instance, there is male and female *bamboo*. Numbers themselves are conceived by them to have genders: a unit and every odd number is male; two, and every even number is female.

The general drift of this system is manifest: it is material. Having lost sight of the Creator of the universe, the Chinese philosophers attributed the propagation of every creature to the

creature. Hence Tien, or Heaven, in common conversation, is spoken of in terms of respect equivalent to "venerable father," while the Earth is called "mother." Between these all sublunary things are said to have been produced, they having first been created by the mystical Tae-keih. How unmeaning and vague do such speculations appear, when compared with these great and sublime truths:—

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

GEN. i. 1.

"By the word of the Lord were the heavens made;
And all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.
He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap:
He layeth up the depth in storehouses.
Let all the earth fear the Lord:
Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.
For he spake, and it was done;
He commanded, and it stood fast." PSA. xxxiii. 6—9.

This review of the classical or sacred books of the Chinese, shows that the philosophers by whom they were written, saw that the multitude were gone far astray from the path of moral rectitude, but how to restore them they knew not. They found them idolaters—they left them idolaters still. Ages had rolled away since any just notion of a Supreme Being had been entertained in China, and reason was too impotent to restore a knowledge of him or his unsearchable ways.

Notwithstanding, therefore, the writings of Confucius and his disciples may have modified the government of China, and, in some degree, ameliorated the condition of the people, they still left the emperor, the court, and his subjects at large, superstitious. With their rites and ceremonies they did not interfere. Rather by the

compilation of the *Ly-king*, or Book of Rites, they confirmed them. In this dark ritual, the religion of the state is amplified and perpetuated. It serves as the key-stone to the superstitious fabric erected by the crafty and designing, while the remaining Sacred Books may be looked upon as so many pillars reared to sustain the massive weight of the building.

One remarkable circumstance connected with the religion of the state in China must not be overlooked. Already the Christian reader must be aware that the emperor, alike with his subjects, are under the influence of "the old serpent, the devil." In this connexion it is a remarkable fact, that the dragon is the emblem of the imperial dignity. In its most hideous shape it is portrayed upon roofs, temples, ensigns, banners, and robes; and statesmen do not worship any other animal. Surely this great heathen monarch could not have adopted a more expressive device to indicate his allegiance to the "Prince of the power of the air that worketh in the children of disobedience." The Chinese have, indeed, an idea of the existence of demons, and not only speak of Satan, but also sacrifice to him. This, however, is rather out of fear than reverence. Confucius sagely recommends that demons and spirits should be kept at a distance, while all due respect is paid to them; and if any one flatters them with profuse sacrifices, he is deemed a man void of sincerity, and a sycophant.

This worship of the evil spirit answers to that of Seeva, or "the destroyer," among the Hindus; to that of Ahriman, or "principle of evil," among

the Persians; to that of Abaddon, of the Orientals; to that of Apollyon, of the Apocalypse; and to that of Anax Apollon, or "destroying king," of Homer. So closely allied in principle are all the religions of the pagan world; and so evident is it, that all pagan nations, whether of remote or modern times, are under the dominion of Satan. As this enemy has walked over the earth seeking whom he might devour, the millions of China have for ages proved his easy and his willing prey. They are ranged under the banners on which he is triumphantly represented in the shape in which he is described in the Apocalypse, that of a dragon.

A striking illustration of this truth is found in the circumstance that some dark hints prevail among the Chinese that the human spirit is allied to spirits in general, to which it returns after death. This tenet in their creed is discovered in their cosmogony. As, say they, all matter revolves in endless succession, and produces out of its chaos shape, either man, beast, plant, or mineral, which in process of time is added to the great mass: so also the spirit, which is moulded from incorporeal essence, is finally reunited to the great bulk. Alas, how grievously are they deceived!

The desire for happiness in the next world seems to be a stranger to the Chinese breast. They live for this world alone. Nor can this form a matter of surprise, since almost all public instruction is disregarded, and that which is imparted relates to this life only. The only system of morals founded on the above dogmas was

drawn out in the days of Kang-he, and amplified in the reign of his son, Yung-chin. It reads thus :—

Pay regard to filial and fraternal duties, that a due importance may be attached to the relations of life.

Respect kindred, that the excellency of harmony may be displayed.

Let concord abound in every neighbourhood, that litigations may be prevented.

Give the chief place to husbandry, and the culture of the mulberry-tree, that food and raiment may be adequately supplied.

Observe economy, that the lavish waste of money may be prevented.

Magnify learning, that the scholar's progress may be facilitated.

Destroy heresy, that the true (or state) doctrines may prevail.

Explain the laws, that the ignorant and obstinate may be warned.

Exhibit a yielding and polite behaviour, that manners may be improved.

Be diligent in employment, that a fixed direction may be given to the industry of the people.

Instruct youth, that they may be prevented from doing evil.

Suppress false accusations, that the innocent may be protected.

Warn people against harbouring other religionists, that they may not be involved in their errors.

Urge the payment of taxes, that you may not have to demand them with importunity.

Extirpate theft and robbery, by promoting the efforts of civil officers.

Settle animosities, that a just value may be set upon human life.

This system of ethics, which constitutes the only religious instruction imparted by the state of China, is appointed to be read every first and fifteenth day of the month, by a mandarin, dressed in his robes of office. For this purpose the military and civil officers meet in a public hall, and after the ceremony of kneeling, they enter into a room, where a mandarin reads the document. Few persons, however, attend; and those who do, look upon the act as a mere ceremony. Hence it may be concluded that the standard of morals in China is very low. It cannot be otherwise, seeing that the mass of the people is left void of instruction, and is simply taught the rules of good conduct by the law. It is nothing more than political morality enforced by rulers, because it serves to establish that authority which they hold over the bodies and the souls of their subjects.

Such is the lamentable condition in which the state religion of China leaves its millions of subjects. It is so fearful, that even some of their own scholars have endeavoured, from a spirit of philanthropy, to apply a remedy. They have made many collections from the pages of writers on moral duties, and benevolent persons distribute such gratuitously among the multitude, who read them with avidity. But the remedy is little better than the disease. These collections, though they contain many truths, are replete with ab-

surdities and pagan notions; and none of their sentiments are calculated to give an effectual impulse to virtuous action, and still less to lead the wandering heart back to God, the true source of happiness. Hence, like all other heathens, the Chinese are slaves to sin, and ignorant of that liberty, the liberty of the gospel, which alone can set them free. During life, and in the hour of death, they exhibit the awful picture of men very far gone astray from original righteousness: they live and die utterly ignorant of, and consequently without fear of Him, "who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." They have scarcely, indeed, a notion of future rewards and punishments; and if any prove virtuous, it is upon that principle on which all the tenets of their moralists are founded—self-interest. The present time alone occupies their thoughts; the future is forgotten: for it never entered into the heart of their moralists to conceive, much less to teach, this sublime precept—"Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you," Matt. vi. 31, 33.

SECTION II.—TAOUIISM.

It has been seen in the preceding article, that the religion of the state in China, and the writings of their moralists, have left the heart universally unaffected. This being the case, human depravity has full scope for action, and the Chinese become an easy prey to the designing. Such

will be fully manifested in the following brief history of Taouism.

Nearly simultaneous with Confucius appeared Laou Keun, or as he is denominated, Taou, that is, *Reason*. This man, apparently dissatisfied with the existing religion, set himself up for a teacher, and succeeded in gaining many votaries. Like the hermits, which are to be met with in many ages and countries, he withdrew from the world, and, residing in the mountains, inculcated a contempt of riches, honours, and all worldly distinctions, as well as the subjugation of every passion that could interfere with personal tranquillity and self-enjoyment.

Such was the sum of the doctrines taught by Taou himself; and, considering the state of the Chinese in the age in which he lived, they contain much that is commendable. But his followers did not rest satisfied with his system. They, professing to act under his guidance (for they maintain that he was an incarnation of some superior being, and that there is no age in which he does not appear among men in human shape) have put forth tenet even more visionary and more soul-degrading than can be found in the state religion itself: they have, in fact, become a race of cheats and jugglers, professing to hold communication with demons.

A legend from one of their works, entitled "The History of the Three States," will attest the debasing nature of the superstitions which have occupied the attention of this sect. It relates to the three brothers Chang, who belonged to the sect, and who, at the head of an insurrection of rebels called "Yellow Caps," produced that

strife which overthrew the Han dynasty. It reads thus:—"Lew-pei stole upon Chang-paou with his whole force. To baffle this, Chang-paou mounted his horse, and, with dishevelled hair and waving sword, betook himself to magic arts. The wind arose with loud peals of thunder, and a black cloud descended, in which appeared a number of men and horses as if engaged in battle. Lew-pei, seeing this, drew off his troops in confusion, and retreated to consult with Choo-tsien. The latter observed, 'Let him have recourse again to magic; I will prepare the blood of swine, sheep, and dogs, and, placing a party on the heights in ambush, wait until the enemy approaches, when his magic will be all dispersed by projecting the same upon him.' Lew-pei assented to this; and directed two leaders, each at the head of one thousand men, to ascend the highest part of the mountain, supplied with the blood of swine, sheep, dogs, and other impure animals. The following day, Chang-paou, with flags displayed and drums beating, offered battle, and Lew-pei proceeded to meet him. They had scarcely joined battle, however, before Chang-paou again put his magic into exercise. The wind and thunder arose, a storm of sand and stones commenced, a dark cloud appeared in the sky, and troops of horsemen seemed to descend. Upon seeing this Lew-pei made a show of retreating, and Chang-paou followed him; but scarcely had they turned the hill, when the troops in ambush started up and poured their impure stores upon the enemy. Instantly the air seemed filled with men and horses of paper or straw, which fell to the earth in confusion; while the

wind and thunder ceased, and the stones and sand no longer flew about. Seeing his magic thus baffled, Chang-paou would have retreated ; but the two leaders of Lew-pei made their appearance on either side, while himself and his lieutenant pursued in the rear. The rebels were utterly defeated and Lew-pei, seeing the flag inscribed, ' Lord of Earth,' ran full speed on his horse towards Chang-paou, whom he wounded in the left arm with an arrow as he fled."

Such is the puerile nature of the superstitions which occupy the priests of Taou. But this is not the extent of the evils which they work in China. They are distinguished by diving into mysteries too difficult for the mind of man, aided only by reason, to comprehend : they have even set themselves to work to invent an elixir of long life, or immortality. This elixir is prepared from a mixture of herbs, and has a contrary effect to the end they propose : it not only does not lengthen, but by its deleterious effect on the human constitution, it shortens life. When the health of their followers declines, however, they console them with the idea that they will soon be numbered with the genii, and enjoy everlasting youth. And yet, notwithstanding all this, there are numbers who eagerly drink the fatal ambrosia.

The followers of Taou are equally addicted to alchymy ; and although they have, like other alchymists, failed in discovering the philosopher's stone, this pursuit makes them acquainted with chemistry. They are the only class of people in China, indeed, who possess any knowledge of this science ; and this often enables them to pass for great physicians, whereby they gain a good

liveliness. Those who pretend to a higher degree of knowledge, afflict themselves, like the Hindoo devotees, and live upon the compassion of the multitude.

A conspicuous species of imposture which the priests of Taouism practise upon the Chinese for the sake of gain, is produced by animal magnetism. By means of this art they perform tricks which might astonish a philosopher: they even convulse their frames to a fearful degree, in order to make the people believe that they are possessed of an evil spirit. Nor do they stop here: they own a union with Satan, and, to avert impending evil, offer to that arch-enemy of mankind the richest oblations. These are offered by the priests, in the midst of the most horrible grimaces, which may be looked upon as a fit emblem of the misery which lost souls endure in the shades of despair. It is as though they had commenced that life here which is the inevitable portion of the wicked hereafter.

The deities worshipped by this sect are too many to be enumerated. Among them stands the indefinable Taou; the San-tsing, or "pure ones;" Shang-te, whom some represent as a deified personage, and others as a supreme being; and Hwa-Kwang, the god of light or fire, who is the very counterpart of the Moloch of antiquity. On the birthday of Hwa-kwang—for the gods of the heathen are born, not self-created—a large coal fire is made, and persons are hired to go through it barefoot, carrying the standards of the idol, in order to prove that he has power to subdue the violence of the element. These wretches are hurried into the fire in the midst of awful

imprecations, and many die annually of its consequences.

The San-tsing, or "pure ones," three in number, seem to be an imitation of the Buddhist Triad. This threefold source, and supreme ruler, is represented as presiding in heaven among the assembled gods, the sun, moon, and stars, and delivering his name and benevolent commands to "the great barefooted angel," to be promulgated amongst mankind, that all who see and recite that name may be delivered from all evil, and attain infinite happiness. The circumstance of the Chinese having an idea of a Trinity is very remarkable, for such had the pagan nations of antiquity, and that universally. In the Orphic mythology there were "counsel, light, and life;" in the Platonic theology there were "the good, the mind, and the soul of the world;" in the Egyptian mysteries there were "On, Isis, and Neith;" in the Latin dogmas there were "Jove, Juno, and Pallas;" in the Magian religion there were "Mithras, Oromazdes, and Ahriman;" and in that of Budhu, "Brahma, Vishnu, and Seeva," from which the Taou sect have probably derived their ideas of the three "pure ones." Now, the question may be asked, Where did the heathen generally obtain a knowledge of this mysterious doctrine, so clearly and so sublimely unfolded in the Hebrew scriptures? Plato has declared that such a doctrine was "not new, nor of yesterday;" and that it had been obscurely delivered before him by Parmenides, the disciple of Pythagoras, and was derived from the Orphic cabbala. The answer then to such a question is clear. The doctrine of the Trinity was derived from patri-

archal revelation, and was ultimately corrupted in its course. So many nations, so many notions, existed of the beings composing the Trinity. How vague these notions are, is manifested to him who is privileged to possess and to believe the Bible. In that he learns to adore "the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," as his covenant God: the Father, who has created; the Son, who has redeemed; and the Holy Ghost, who sanctifies the soul and makes it "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

The followers of Taou represent that he was the discoverer of the spiritual world; and hence they have founded a system of magic, by which the connexion of mortals and spirits might be maintained. Their creed peoples the spiritual world with the souls of illustrious men, who, under the name of Heën, or sages, perform the functions of rulers and lords; while the spirits of those who are contaminated with certain vices are stationed between heaven and earth, in the shape of genii, elf, and hobgoblins, where they effect both good and evil; and the souls of hardened sinners are changed to demons, and either sent to abodes of misery, or left on earth to work mischief. All nature is represented by their priests as teeming with invisible beings, which they alone can keep under due restraint. As for Taou himself, he is represented as the chief of the Seën, (which is the general denomination of the genii, elfs, and hobgoblins,) in which capacity he still presides over the world, or rather China.

The sect which promulgates these wild reveries has undergone many vicissitudes. The follies of its professors were clearly exposed by the dis-

ciples of Confucius ; but they frequently revenged themselves, by establishing their authority at court, and expelling the Confucians. At various periods of Chinese history they practised their arts of imposition upon the sovereigns of the country ; and under the Tang dynasty they gained such credit, that the title of Tien-sze, or “ celestial doctors or teachers,” was conferred on them, and a superb temple was erected to Taou, in which his image was placed. Since that period they have been on the wane ; but it is said that they have still a large establishment in the province of Keang-sy, where numbers flock from all parts, to obtain cures from diseases, or to learn their destinies. But they have formidable rivals throughout the country in the persons of the Buddhist priests, to whom the people now more generally resort. Hence, though their temples are still numerous, the priesthood is very poor, and the system exhibits signs of an approaching dissolution. Budhuism bids fair to erect a gorgeous fabric on its ruins ; but hope points to the period when Christianity shall prevail over this and all other superstitions.

SECTION III.—BUDHUISM.

Chinese history relates that, in consequence of a dream, the emperor Ming-te, of the Han dynasty, sent ambassadors, A.D. 58, to the west, or India, in search of “ the holy one,” whom Confucius had pointed out. On reaching India these ambassadors discovered the sect of Buddhists, which was said to have existed for about one thousand years, and, imagining that they had discovered the ob-

ject of their search, they brought back some of them, with their books, to China.

The life of the founder of this idolatry is involved in mystery. Some, indeed, doubt his existence; others maintain that various persons of this name have lived and taught at different periods. The traditional account of him which led the ambassadors of China to conclude that they had found "the holy one," is briefly this:—

Budhu was both king and priest in a country of the west, with a queen, whom he made a divinity. He was obliged to abdicate his power, and seek a retreat for twelve years, after which he taught the dogma of the transmigration of souls, which he made the vehicle of a system of rewards and punishments hereafter. Ultimately he regained his power, and he departed this life at an advanced age, being at once transformed into the god Fō, or Budhu.

It is commonly said by the disciples of Fō in China, that while he is but one person, he has three forms. These are represented by three distinct gilded images, called the "three precious or pure Budhus." The engraving at the beginning of this chapter represents the Triad of Budhu—San, Paou, Fūh, "past, present, and to come." At the right hand is seated the first, whose reign is already past; in the centre, Paou, who now reigns over the world; at the left hand, Fūh, whose reign has not yet come.

As a reformer, Budhu's character is indicated by the legend prevalent in China, that he aimed at instructing men, "to amend their conduct, and practise virtue." To this end he issued these five general precepts:—1. Thou shalt kill no living

creature. 2. Thou shalt not steal. 3. Thou shalt not marry. 4. Thou shalt not speak falsely. 5. Thou shalt drink no wine. Budhu also defined ten sins which he prohibited; namely, the killing of animals, theft, adultery, falsehood, discord, harsh language, idle talk, covetousness, envy and malice, and following the doctrines of false gods. From this it would appear that Budhu, or whoever was the founder of this system, was acquainted with the Decalogue, many of its points being in strict accordance with those uttered on Mount Sinai, amidst thunderings and lightnings, by the voice of the Almighty.

Had Budhuism stopped at this precise point, it might have proved a boon to mankind; but it was far otherwise. Like all other pagan religions, it erected temples and fabricated idols, before which its priests called upon their devotees to bow, in lowly adoration, instead of the One True God.

The features of Budhuism vary in different countries. The progress of the Budhuists in China is thus described by Gutzlaff:—"Accommodating their system to all the existing superstitions, they open the door to every sort of converts, who might retain as many of their old prejudices as they chose. They were by no means rigorous in enforcing the obligations of men to morality. To expiate sins, offerings to the idols and priests were sufficient. A temple built in honour of Fō, and richly endowed, would suffice to blot out every stain of guilt, and serve as a portal to the blessed mansions of Budhu. When death approached, they promised to every one of their votaries speedy promotion in the scale of the metempsychosis, till he should be absorbed

in Nirupan, or Nirvana—nonentity. With these prospects the poor deluded victim left the world. To facilitate his release from purgatory they said mass, and supplied the wants of the hungry departed spirit by rich offerings of food, which the priests in reality devoured. As Confucius had raised veneration towards ancestors into idolatrous worship, they were ready to perform the office of priests before the tablets of the dead.

“Notwithstanding this accommodating creed, the Chinese government has at times disapproved of it. As the importance of marriage has been acknowledged in China from time immemorial, and almost every person at years of maturity has been obliged to enter that state, the celibacy of the priesthood of Fō was considered a very dangerous custom. Budhu regarded contemplation apart from worldly cares as the nearest approach to bliss and perfection; therefore his followers passed lives of indolence, and practised begging as the proper means of maintaining themselves. This was diametrically opposed to the political institutions of China, where the emperor himself sets the example of holding the plough. If such a system prevailed extensively, the immense population of the empire must be reduced to starvation, for it is only by the utmost exertion that it can subsist. These serious faults in the foreign creed gave occasion for its enemies to devise its extirpation. It was proscribed as a dangerous heresy, and a cruel persecution followed; but it had taken too deep root to be easily eradicated. Then, again, some emperor would think more favourably of its tendency, and even adopt it himself. Yet the natural consequence

of its tenets was, that it could never become a religion of the state, and that the priests were never able to exercise any permanent influence over the populace. Besides, the Chinese are too rational to believe implicitly all the absurd Budhuistic fables, nor can they generally persuade themselves that their numerous images are gods. When we add to this their national apathy towards every thing concerning religion, from their being entirely engrossed by the affairs of this life, we can easily account for the disesteem in which they hold Budhuism."

The Confucians maintain that the doctrines of Fō unfit men for the active duties of life, by fixing their speculations so entirely on another state of existence, as to lead some fanatics to commit suicide, in order to anticipate futurity. The charge appears to be just; for the mental abstraction of the priests is so intense, that they have nearly all of them an expression approaching to idiocy. One of their most famous professors is even said to have passed nine years with his eyes fixed upon a wall.

In their system of moral retribution the priests of Fō teach that what a man receives now is an indication of what he will receive hereafter; or, in other words, that he may augur his future condition from his behaviour in this life. Merit, however, seems to consist as much in inaction as action; in the abstinence from sin, as in the practice of virtue. Moreover, in one of their works, entitled "Merits and Demerits examined," their followers are directed to keep a debtor and creditor account with themselves of the acts of each day, and at the end of the year to wind it

up. If the balance is in his favour, it serves as a foundation of a stock of merits for the ensuing year; and if against him, it must be liquidated by future good deeds. It teaches them, in truth, to make up an account with Heaven, and demand the balance in bliss, or pay it by sufferings and penance.

This fallacious tenet of Budhuism is generally adopted by the Chinese, and it affords an analogy to the system of penances and indulgences in the Romish church: nor does the resemblance between the two religions stop here. They practise the ordinances of celibacy, fasting, and prayers for the dead; they have holy water, rosaries of beads, which they count with their prayers, the worship of relics, and a monastic habit resembling that of the Franciscans; and they likewise kneel before an idol called *T'cin-how*, or queen of Heaven.

These singular coincidences between the Roman Catholic religion and Budhuism led some of the J suit missionaries to conjecture, that the Chinese had received a glimpse of Romish Christianity, by the way of Tartary, from the Nestorians; while others suppose that St. Thomas himself had been among them; and others concluded that Satan had practised a trick upon his friends, the Jesuits! Gutzlaff speaks more rationally on the subject, thus:—"That they should count their prayers by means of a rosary, and chant masses for both the living and the dead; that they should live in a state of celibacy, shave their heads, fast, etc., might be perhaps accounted for as a mere coincidence of errors into which men are prone to fall: but their adoration of

Tein-how, the 'queen of heaven,' called also *Shing-moo*, 'the holy mother,' must be a tenet engrafted upon Budhuism from foreign traditions. We are unable to fix the exact date of the adoption of this deity. There is a legend of modern date among the people of Fokien, which tells us that she was a virgin of that province, who in a dream saw her kindred in danger of being wrecked, and boldly rescued them; but this affords no satisfactory solution. It is likely that some degenerate Nestorian Christians amalgamated with their faith and ceremonies the prevailing errors of China, and caused the priests of Budhu to adopt many of their rites." This writer saw a marble bust of Napoleon, before which incense was burnt in a temple; whence he remarks, that it would not be extraordinary if they had also adopted among their other idols such a conspicuous object of worship as the Virgin is among Roman Catholics.

This supposition seems to be corroborated by the fact, that the Saviour himself is ranked among the number of Chinese gods! This is proved by the following history of Christ, as translated by Dr. Milne, from a work entitled, "A complete History of Gods and Genii:" a work which was compiled in twenty-two octavo volumes, in the reign of the immortal Kang-he. "The extreme western nations say, that at the distance of ninety-seven thousand *ly** from China, a journey of about three years, commences the border of Sy-keang. In that country there was formerly

* The *ly*, or Chinese mile, is equal to 1,897½ English feet. The distance from China to Palestine, therefore, according to the notion of the Chinese, is about 30,000 English miles.

a virgin named Ma-le-a. In the first year of Yuen-chy, in the dynasty Hăn, a celestial god reverently announced to her, saying, 'The Lord of heaven has selected thee to be his mother.' Having finished his discourse, she actually conceived, and afterwards bore a son. The mother, filled with joy and reverence, wrapped him in a cloth, and laid him in a manger. A flock of celestial gods (angels) sang and rejoiced in the void space. Forty days after, his mother presented him to the holy teacher, and named him Yay-soo. When twelve years of age, he followed his mother to worship in the holy place. Returning home they lost each other. After three days' search, coming into the palace, she saw Yay-soo sitting on an honourable seat, conversing with aged and learned doctors, about the works and doctrines of the Lord of heaven. Seeing his mother, he was glad, returned with her, and served her with the utmost filial reverence. When thirty years of age he left his mother and teacher, and travelling to the country of Yu-teh-a, taught men to do good. The sacred miracles which he wrought were very numerous. The chief families and those in office in that country, being proud and wicked in the extreme, envied him for the multitude of those who joined themselves to him, and planned to slay him. Among the twelve disciples of Yay-soo, there was a covetous one, named Yu-tah-sze. Aware of the wish of the greater part of his countrymen, and seizing on a proffered gain, he led forth a multitude at night, who, taking Yay-soo, bound him, and carried him before Ana-sze, in the court-house of Pelah-to. Rudely stripping off his garments, they tied him

to a stone pillar, inflicting on him upwards of 5,400 stripes, until his whole body was torn and mangled ; but still he was silent, and like a lamb remonstrated not. The wicked rabble, taking a cap made of piercing thorns, pressed it forcibly down on his temples. They hung a vile red cloak on his body, and hypocritically did reverence to him as a king. They made a very large and heavy machine of wood, resembling the character *ten*, or an upright cross, which they compelled him to bear on his shoulders. The whole way it sorely pressed him down, so that he moved and fell alternately. His hands and feet were nailed to the wood, and being thirsty, a sour and bitter drink was given him. When he died, the heavens were darkened, the earth shook ; the rocks striking against each other, were broken into small pieces. He was then aged thirty-three years. On the third day after his death, he again returned to life, and his body was splendid and beautiful. He appeared first to his mother, in order to remove her sorrow. Forty days after, when about to ascend to heaven, he commanded his disciples, in all a hundred and two, to separate and go every where under heaven, to teach, and administer a sacred water, to wash away the sins of those who should join their sect. Having finished his commands, a flock of ancient holy ones followed him up to the celestial kingdom. „ Ten days after, a celestial god descended, to receive his mother, who also ascended up on high. Being set above the nine orders, she became the empress of heaven and earth, and the protectress of human beings.”

The writer who furnished this curious Chinese account of Christ, has supplied another remarkable coincidence between the practices of Budhuism and Popery. He says—"There is something to be said in favour of those Christians who believe in the magic powers of foreign words, and who think a prayer either more acceptable to the Deity, or more suited to common edification, because the people do not generally understand it. They are not singular in this belief. Some of the Jews had the same opinion: the followers of Budhu, and the Mohammedans, all cherish the same sentiment. From the seat of his holiness at Rome, and eastward through all Asia, to the cave of the Jammaboos of Japan, this sentiment is espoused. The bloody Druids of ancient Europe; the naked gymnosophists of India; the Mohammedan Hatib; the Hoshang, or Buddhist priests of China; the Roman Catholic clergy; and the bonzes of Japan, all entertain the notion that the mysteries of religion will be the more revered the less they are understood, and the devotions of the people performed by proxy the more welcome in heaven for their being dressed in the garb of a foreign tongue. Thus the synagogue, the mosque, the pagan temple, and the Romish church, seem all to agree in ascribing marvellous efficacy to the sounds of an unknown language; and as they have Jews, Mohammedans, and pagans, on their side, those Christians who plead for the use of an unknown tongue in the services of religion have certainly a host, as to number, in support of their opinion, though Scripture, reason, and common sense are on the other side.

"The sacred language of the Budhists is called,

‘the language of Fàn,’ which is the name of the birth-place of Budhu. It is totally unknown to the Chinese generally, and the priests themselves know nothing of it beyond the sound of a few favourite words and phrases. There are, it is true, glossaries attached to some of their religious books, which are designed to explain these technical shibboleths; but the definition is sometimes given in other technical terms, equally unintelligible; and from their general ignorance of letters, very few of the priests are capable of consulting such helps. Among them there may now and then be found a scholar, and some have written books; but as a body they are extremely ignorant. Beyond the stated and occasional lessons of their liturgy, which they have learned to repeat by rote, they have very little knowledge of books; and many of them cannot read. As a sect, however, they profess to cherish the most profound veneration for the language of Fàn. They ascribe miraculous effects to the use of the written character and of the oral language, and consider both to be of celestial origin. To the repetition of the bare sounds, without regard to the meaning, they attach the highest importance; hence they occasionally go over the same words hundreds and thousands of times. I once asked a priest, ‘What advantage can you expect to derive from merely repeating a number of words, with the sense of which you are entirely unacquainted?’ His answer was, ‘True, I do not know the sense; it is profound and mysterious; yet the benefit of often repeating the sounds is incalculable, it is infinite!’”

We now notice the paradise of the Buddhists. The creed of Budhuism represents that there are

thirty-three stories of heaven, and that Budhu sits upon a lotus, which is a favourite type of creative power, in the uppermost story, whence he surveys the whole world. The land of his kingdom is gold, and its gardens, groves, houses, and temples are adorned with seven kinds of precious stones. Around it are seven rows of trees, seven elegant net-works, seven fences of palisades ; while in the midst are seven towers of gems, having seven flights of pearl stairs, and seven bridges made of pearls. It is inhabited by the Olo-han, the first disciples of Budhu ; by the demi-gods, and pure gods of the ocean ; by the numberless renovating Fōs ; and by the demi-gods of the past, present, and future ; and all the sages, whether produced in heaven or earth. To obtain an entrance into this kingdom, it is represented that a man must have Fō in the mind, and Fō in the lips, at all times and seasons ; and Fō is made to swear that if such a votary should miss the bliss he seeks, he will descend from his lotus throne, and no longer be a god !

The paradise of Fō includes most of those sensual indulgences which the founders of false religions have universally promised their votaries. When those die who have earned for themselves a title to inherit it, their bodies, reproduced from the lotus, become pure and fragrant, and their countenances fair and well formed. Their hearts are replete with wisdom, and without vexation. If they dress not, they are not cold ; and if they do, they are not made hot. So also, if they do not eat, they do not become hungry ; and if they do, they are not satiated. They are without pain, irritation, and sickness, and they do not become

aged. Around them they behold the lotus flowers, and trees of gems, delightfully waving, like the motion of a sheet of embroidered silk; while over their heads they see the firmament full of to-lo flowers, falling in beautiful confusion, like rain. In fine, the felicity of the paradise of Fō may be called superlative, and its inhabitants are represented as enjoying it for ever.

These absurd notions of paradise are equalled by those which the Buddhists entertain of hell. These have been thus described from a translation made by Dr. Morrison, of the explanatory letter-press on ten large wood-cuts, which are occasionally exhibited in their temples, and which have reference to this subject :—"Prior to their final condemnation, the souls are exposed to judgment in the courts of the Shě-ming-wáng, 'the ten kings of darkness.' The proceedings in these courts are represented exactly after the manner of the Chinese judicial trials, with the difference in the punishments, which, in these pictures of the infernal regions, are of course sufficiently appalling. In one view are seen the judge, with his attendants and officers of the court, to whom the merciful goddess Kuan-yin appears, in order to save from punishment a soul that is condemned to be pounded in a mortar. Other punishments consist of sawing asunder, tying to a burning pillar of brass, etc. Liars have their tongues cut out; thieves and robbers are cast upon a hill of knives, and so on. After the trials are over, the more eminently good ascend to paradise; the middling class return to earth in other bodies to enjoy riches and honours; while the wicked are tormented in hell, or transformed into various animals whose dispositions

and habits they imitated during their past lives."

It appears singular, that while the Buddhist priests teach their votaries there is a heaven and hell, that they should also teach the dogma of the transmigration of souls, in which doctrine they are represented as being finally swallowed up in annihilation. But the truth is, they know not what they teach. As, indeed, they have collected idols from every country, so it would appear that they have collected notions from every country, and grafted them on their original creed, so that it has become hard to be understood and explained.

The priests of Budhu are very numerous in China. They are taken from the dregs of the people, are a stupid and indolent class of men, and are generally very poor. They live a life of celibacy, and confine themselves principally to a vegetable diet. The costume which they wear resembles that of the Romish priesthood; and they are, in China, a society of mendicants, and go about like the monks, asking alms for the support of their establishment. Among them there is also a regular gradation of rank, as in the Romish church. According to his reputation for sanctity, his length of service, and other claims, each priest may rise from the rank of servitor, whose duty it is to perform the menial offices of the temple, to that of Tae-hoshang, abbot, or head of the establishment.

The temples of Budhuism differ very little from those of the state religion and Taouism. One of the most celebrated, which is at Canton, has been thus described by an eye-witness:—"I visited, one evening, the temple situated at a short distance,

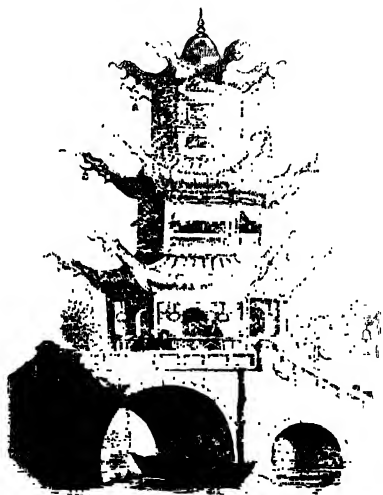
on the opposite side of the river to that on which the factories are built. Having crossed with my companions in a boat, we proceeded a little way down the river, and landed at a dirty causeway, near some timber-yards, in which a quantity of fir timber of various dimensions was piled with an extreme degree of regularity. The entrance to the temple, or temples, and extensive grounds about them, was close to the landing-place; and passing some miserable fruit and eating stalls adjoining, we noticed a large, clean, open space, planted with trees, and having in the centre a broad pavement of granite, kept very clean. The quietness that reigned within formed a pleasing retreat from the noise and bustle without. This paved way brought us to the first portico, where we beheld, on huge granite pedestals, a colossal figure on each side, placed there as guards of the entrance to the temple of Budhu: the one on the right, in entering, is the warrior Chin-ky; and on the left is Chin-loong. After passing these terrific colossal guards, we entered another court somewhat similar to the first, also planted with trees, with a continuation of the granite footpath, which led, through several gateways, to one of the temples. At this time the priesthood were assembled, worshipping, chanting, striking gongs arranged in rows, and frequently performing the Ko-tow in adoration of their gilded, senseless deity. The priests, in shaven crowns, and arrayed in the yellow robes of their religion, appeared to go through the mummerly with devotion. They had the lowering look of bigotry, which constant habit had at last legibly written upon their countenances. As soon as the mummerly had ceased, the priests all flocked out of the temple, adjourned to their

respective rooms, divested themselves of their official robes, and the senseless figures were left to themselves with the lamps burning before them.”*

Such temples as these are to be found in every province, and they partake of the nature of monastic establishments. Some of them are so large, that they contain two or three hundred priests, who are supported by the offerings or legacies of the votaries, like the priests of Popery. Many of the temples are erected upon mountains, and in ravines; and the priesthood in these live as hermits, and do nothing but eat, pray, and burn incense. Sometimes, however, they make long journeys, in order to talk to the people about the miracles which they pretend have happened in their temples, hoping thereby to increase their influence. The pilgrims who repair to their temples, which they do in great numbers, live a life of ease and comfort, performing their worship, counting their beads, and afterwards regaling themselves with the viands which the priests prepare. Some of their devotees, though mingling in the world, have monthly meetings for prayer, at which one of the elder priests presides, and females are allowed to attend.

Connected with the religion and worship of Fō are those pagodas of China, which consist some of nine, and others of seven stories. This has evident reference to the tales of the ninth incarnation of Vishnu, and the seven Budhus, who are said to have existed at different periods. Images of Fō, and the various gods and saints associated with him, are found in niches of the wall, as the visitor mounts the spiral staircase

which conducts to the summit. Many of these pagodas are in a dilapidated state ; and whenever they are found in repair, they are attached to extensive establishments, as those above described, and which are enriched by the contributions and bequests of their votaries. The government has nothing to do with their maintenance, and it



TEMPLE AND BRIDGE.

even exhibits a repugnance towards them. It does not, however, prescribe Budhuism, as from time to time it has other sects. On the contrary, its priests are left free to promulgate their dark superstitions, and to make converts throughout the length and breadth of the empire. -

It is not known how many votaries Budhuism

has in China. The greater part of the population profess no religion at all, and are satisfied with repairing occasionally to the temples; and even those who do, exhibit no sectarianism. They do not boast that they are of Taou, or of Budhu, but rest themselves contented with showing their particular predilections to a creed by their donations. While, however, no statement can be made as to the number of the disciples of Budhu in China, some judgment may be formed on this point from the fact, that the priesthood amounts to one or two millions of individuals, and that these are dispersed abroad throughout the whole empire. In China Proper, indeed, they are kept under some restraint by the indifference, and even repugnance, displayed towards them by the government; but on the other side of the Great Wall, towards Mongol Tartary, they not only prey upon the people as so many locusts, but defy the emperor; for when the present sovereign sent a mission beyond the wall, one of the principal Lama priests refused to come out of his tent, and sent an insulting message to the ambassadors. This fact is decisive as to their power, and the influence they hold over the minds of the multitude, at least in that part of the Chinese empire. Success has there so elated them, that they have grown bold enough to defy the emperor, albeit he has for his title such high-sounding and potent names. They know the might of superstition—that it holds the multitude enthralled as with iron chains, and they repose in safety beneath its wide-spreading shade.

The fact of China swarming with so many Budhu priests, is one of the most appalling fea-

tures in their history. What fearful evils they are capable of working among a mass of people so proverbially simple and prone to superstition as the Chinese are, words cannot describe; and when to these are added the priests of the state, and the priests of Taou, the evil receives an addition fearful in the extreme. The Chinese are generally fatalists, or believers in inevitable destiny; and those who are not, believe that *conduct is fate*, or, in other words, that a man may lay the foundation of his own destiny by his actions. Then again, they believe in ghosts, against which they use talismans and spells without number. They are also given to omens, and various kinds of divinations, all of which bear the marks of the strangest and wildest superstitions. How degraded they are, is proved by an account of the charms and talismans hung up in houses, or worn about the person. Specimens of these are in the museum of the Royal Asiatic Society, and a few of these have been thus described:—"Among the principal are 'money swords,' as they are called, consisting of a number of ancient copper coins, each with a square hole in the middle, fastened together over a piece of iron, shaped like a sword with a cross hilt. These are suspended at the heads of sleeping couches and beds, that the supposed guardianship of the sovereigns in whose reigns the coin was issued may keep away ghosts and evil spirits. They are chiefly used in houses or rooms where persons have committed suicide, or suffered a violent death; and sick people sometimes resort to them, in the hope of hastening their recovery. Their efficacy is no doubt fully equal to that of a horse-shoe nailed over a door,

or any of those infallible devices formerly adopted in this country against witches and ghosts. The Chinese have commonly a firm belief in, and consequently a great dread of, the wandering spirits of persons who have come to an unfortunate end, and which they denominate *kuei*. When Europeans first arrived in the country, their red or yellow hair, and high noses, were strongly opposed to the fair ideal of Chinese comeliness. Mothers and nurses pointed them out as ogres and devils to their children; and hence the present term for any Europeans, *fân-kuei*, 'foreign ghost, spirit or devil,' with some allusion, perhaps, to their wandering so far from their homes."

When the pious bishop Heber heard of an officer having found a dying Brahmin exposed by the side of the Ganges, in conformity with the religion of the Hindoos, that he might expire within reach of its sacred waters, and when he was told that this Brahmin lost his caste because he received food at the hands of that officer, whereby his life was saved, he exclaimed, "If I am permitted to rescue one such miserable creature from this wretched superstition, I shall think myself repaid for all I sacrifice." These are memorable words, and worthy the adoption of every one who reads of the superstitions of the Chinese—that many-millions and perishing people.

Having thus described the three absorbing sects of China, it may not prove uninteresting to take a brief view of the progress of Nestorianism, Popery, Protestantism, Mohammedanism, and other religions which have been from time to time introduced into that country.

Section IV.—Other Religions.

NESTORIANISM.

The Jesuits relate that, in the year 1265, some Roman Catholic missionaries discovered at one of the principal cities of the province of Shen-sy, an inscription in Syriac letters, which recorded the first introduction of Christianity into China in the year 635, by certain Nestorian bishops, who had been driven eastward by persecutions in the Roman provinces. These refugees, and their descendants, seem to have exerted themselves in promulgating the truths of the gospel; and Marco Polo relates, that they so far succeeded, as to be allowed to build two churches in a city on the banks of the Yang-tse-keang, where a Nestorian, named Mar-Sachis, was appointed to the government of the city for three years. The influence, however, which Nestorianism had upon the Chinese must have been very slight; for all traces of it are soon lost in the pages of history.

POPERY.

The first mission for the conversion of the Chinese to the Roman Catholic faith, was sent out by Pope Innocent iv., in 1246; but the first successful promoter of it was John de Corvino, who was despatched to Asia by Pope Nicholas iv., in 1288. John de Corvino was allowed to settle at Peking, where he built a church, and is said to have baptized many thousands of converts, as well as to have instructed numbers of children in the Latin language, and the tenets of Romanism. At his death, however, the establishment which

he founded seems to have sunk into insignificance, if not wholly to have ceased. It remained for the Portuguese Jesuits to establish a permanent footing in China. And this they did through the zealous labours of Francis Xavier and Ricci. The latter, especially, notwithstanding fierce opposition, finally established himself at Peking; where, by his adroit and pliant conduct—for he was a Jesuit in the true sense of the word—as well as by his great talents, he became the object of admiration. At his death, in 1610, thirty churches existed in the province of Keangnan alone; and, after that event, kindred spirits pursued the work with equal vigour and cunning. Even mandarins embraced the tenets of Popery. Since that period the Jesuits have undergone various vicissitudes. They were tolerated by some emperors, while others raised against them a fierce persecution. The period of their greatest success was during the reign of the first emperor of the Ta-tsing dynasty, when there were few large cities in which some of their establishments were not found. At that time, also, other orders flocked over to China; but when that emperor died, a general persecution commenced. They revived again, however, under the rule of Kang-he, who perceiving that he could learn much from these foreigners, took them under the wing of his protection. But dissensions arose among the different orders, which proved a stronger drawback upon their missions than all former persecutions. It raised up for them two powerful opponents in the persons of Kang-he's successors; the former of whom abolished the order of Jesuits, and the latter of whom did everything in his power to

extirpate Romanism. The present monarch, who succeeded these bitter foes to the Roman Catholic religion, has uniformly shown more forbearance till recently, when he issued a furious edict, commanding all "native Christians," on pain of death, to renounce their faith. Notwithstanding, it does not appear that any measures for putting the edict into execution have been taken. The foreign priests have been dismissed from the interior; but the "native Christians" are left to worship in their private churches; for they are not permitted to worship openly, except at Macao and Peking.

Of the Chinese Roman Catholics it has been said, that they retain much of their native character. This is no matter for wonder; for setting aside the fact, that the Jesuits, observing them wedded to antiquated custom, permitted them to retain many of their superstitions and idolatries, the religion they taught was little better calculated to improve the heart. They took away from them some of their clay-gilt gods, but they substituted for them little images and relics of saints. Hence the heart, the seat of all virtuous and pious action, remained unaffected. And thus will it remain, till touched by the Holy Spirit, through the preaching of the pure and unadulterated gospel.

PROTESTANTISM.

There have been peculiar difficulties in the way of Protestant missions in China. A broad seal has been set upon the interior, so that the heralds of the gospel could not have entered had they been sent. This is proved by the previous account of the progress of Popery in China; it was

only by art and cunning that it was introduced, and by sinful temporizing that it became established. And even after the Romanists had thus worked their way into the good graces of the Chinese, the Jesuits were finally expelled the country in disgrace.

Protestants, however, have not altogether slumbered in this good cause. Some, notwithstanding they have seen a lion in the way, have zealously braved the danger. The first of these was Dr. Morrison, who translated the Scriptures, and compiled a dictionary of the Chinese language, thereby laying a broad foundation for future operations. He was afterwards joined by Dr. Milne, who was compelled, through the jealousy of the Portugese, to remove from the coasts of China to Malacca. This, coupled with the fact that the friendly intercourse with Europeans is jealously watched by the Chinese government, in order to its prevention, precluded the free course of the word of life. And yet a few Chinese embraced the gospel, and were ready to venture all for the name of Christ. Yielding to the influences of the Holy Spirit, they forsook their pagan altars, and bowed down before the cross of the Redeemer. Forsaking their "lying vanities," they built their hopes on the Rock of Ages, and they testified their sincerity by pointing out that Saviour to others whom they had found so precious to their own souls.

A primary object of the missionaries has been to enlighten the nation by means of religious tracts and books. A series of such were published at Batavia and Malacca, and widely circulated in every part of the empire, as well as in

the settlements of the Archipelago and Siam. Afterwards, when the few native members of the Protestant church at Canton were dispersed, the press was transferred to Singapore, and thence the distribution of books on the coast was still continued with gratifying results. The people read them with avidity, as though they were thirsting for the waters of life. So eager were they to receive them, that the emperor became desirous of knowing their contents; and though he at first simply pronounced them to be "unclassical," on a recent occasion, when a successful attempt was made to scatter the word of eternal life by means of books, an edict was issued, complaining of the intrusion. But no edict promulgated by the emperor of China, is sufficiently authoritative to prevent his subjects from receiving these publications. Recent events, moreover, have opened a highway for them, not only on the coasts, but into the very interior of China. Means only now are wanting. These obtained, and books and missionaries may unite in the hallowed work of evangelizing China. And they may go forth in the sure and certain hope that the best results will follow. Let true Christians but arise to the rescue of these benighted wanderers of the human race from the shackles in which they are bound, and they, by the blessing of the Holy Spirit resting upon their labours, will be set free. Difficulties may be in the way, but Christian love and zeal can readily surmount all these. China is a field open to Christian heroes and martyrs, and who are more irresistible than they? Fighting under the banners of Christ, they can command the

victory over all the powers set in array against them. Let them, then, advance to the very centre of Satan's empire, and they will not fail to pull down the ensign of the great dragon. Let all the churches under the immediate influence of the Divine Spirit unite in this great work, looking upwards for a blessing, and it must be accomplished. China, hitherto one of the strongest holds of Satan, will then become a section of the "kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ."*

MOHAMMEDANISM.

It has been urged, that practical toleration is a principle on which the Chinese government is founded. Would that history bore out this assertion, for then had the gospel long ago found its way even into the centre of China. Unfortunately, however, it only holds good so far as false religions are concerned, and to them only in a limited sense. Still, it is a remarkable fact, that while the government of China has watched over the proceedings of Protestants with a jealous eye, it has permitted the growth of false religions; and even of Mohammedanism. It can only be accounted for by the facts, that Christianity alone is calculated to overthrow the hollow system on which the government is based, and those by which it is surrounded; and that the carnal mind is enmity against God, and the everlasting gospel of his Son Jesus Christ.

In the early ages of Mohammedanism, it was promulgated by the sword. The motto of that

For more ample details concerning Protestantism in China, the reader is referred to the last chapter.

false prophet was — “When ye encounter the unbelievers, strike off their heads, until ye have made a great slaughter among them; and bind them in bonds; and either give them a free dismissal afterwards, or exact a ransom, until the war shall have laid down its arms.” The immediate successors of Mohammed followed his line of policy, and all his followers for ages burned with proselyting zeal. A short time after the death of Mohammed, his faith entered the western provinces of China; but its progress was inconsiderable till the ninth and tenth centuries, when some Arab merchants formed several congregations among the Chinese. Under Kub-lai-khan’s reign, also, the highest mandarins were chosen from amongst the Saracens; and they would not fail to endeavour to propagate their doctrines. These so far gained credit, that to this day, some few Mussulmans are to be found in almost every large city of the empire; but they possess small influence over the idolatrous community. Hence it is that they have been generally left by the government to live, and to enjoy their opinions, unmolested. No emperor; however, except Kub-lai, has favoured them; nor is it likely that they will ever become a predominant sect. In some places they have built mosques, as in Canton, Kan-suh, and beyond the Yellow River, on the banks of the Great Canal; but they generally appear to be despised by their fellow-countrymen. Moreover, they are not very strict Mussulmans; for they wear the same dress, eat the same kind of food, pork excepted, and perform nearly the same ceremonies as the multitude.

THE JEWS IN CHINA.

In the works of Benjamin of Tudela, it is mentioned, that some Jews had settled in the Chinese empire. This information is essentially correct; for Gozani, one of the Portuguese Jesuits, visited their synagogue, which is at Kae-fung-foo, the capital of the province of Honan. They are called the Taou-kin-keaou, "the sect that extracts the sinew." Father Gozani sought to obtain a sight of the manuscript of the Pentateuch which they had in their possession, and of which they read a section every sabbath; but in this he did not succeed.* When they read it, he observes, they cover the face with a transparent veil, in memory of Moses, who descended from the mountain with his face covered, and who thus published the Decalogue and the law of God to his people. The fact of their reading it in public may serve as a key to the analogies drawn between the Decalogue and the commandments ascribed to Budhu, etc.; for these Jews are said to have reached China two hundred years before Christ.† The sect attracts very little attention, and remains entirely unnoticed by the government, although they still adhere to the traditions of their fathers, and conform to many points of the law.

* This has since been seen; but all attempts to obtain a collation of their Scriptures with ours, have failed.

† See pages 105, 106.

THE NATIVE CHINESE SECTS.

There are various sects among the Chinese, which may be termed semi-religious, semi-political. Among these are the *Pih-leên-keou*, or "the white water-lily sect," which sprung from Budhuism, and use the lotus as a badge of their order;—the *San-ho-hwuy*, or "triad society," so denominated from the three ruling powers of the universe, heaven, earth, and man, and which is said to have sprung up from the former;—the *Tsing-cha-mun*, or "tea sect," who burn incense, make offerings of fine tea, bow down and worship the heavens, the earth, sun, moon, fire and water, Fö, and their deceased parents;—and a sect which has for its title, "The wonderful association." The members of all these sects have been persecuted at various times for designing to subvert the government, and the effect does not appear to have been without a cause. This is especially the case with the *Pih-leên-keou*, and the *San-ho-hwuy*; the former of which have frequently broken out into open rebellion; and the latter have for their ostensible object the overthrow of the Tartar dynasty, which they are bound by oath to effect, either sooner or later. The members of the *San-ho-hwuy* have secret signs, like the clubs of the Druids and Freemasons in England, by which they make themselves known to each other, and are bound in duty to afford mutual assistance. The very essence of their creed, likewise, consists in the explanation of some unintelligible symbols, in which three powers, three virtues, and three determinations, are always traced.

That associations of this nature should be formed in China, is a very natural consequence of the state in which society exists. Ancient and modern history attest with a trumpet tongue, that, where the mind is universally influenced by idolatry, there no government can rule in perfect security. The pillars thereof must ever be in danger of being dissolved; for the heart, influenced by its inherent depravity alone, neither feels nor knows a motive for right conduct. It may be awed into submission by the grandeur and power of monarchs for a while, as it is in China; but there ever will be an under-current flowing from its marvellous source of evil, and secretly working mischief. It is only when human nature becomes deeply imbued with the divine principles of Christianity—only when mankind have the fear of God before their eyes, that they perform all their relative duties aright.



CHAPTER IV.

GOVERNMENT AND LEGISLATION OF THE CHINESE.



MANDARIN IN SEDAN, BEARERS, AND SERVANT WITH LANTERN.

THE antiquity of China is indicated by the theoretically patriarchal form of its government. This is a remarkable circumstance, when coupled with the consideration that great revolutions have shaken the very foundations of the empire of China. Its institutions have been subverted by strangers, who ruled the people with a rod of iron; but the empire has again resumed its former outward state, and the people returned to their former condition; the emperor has again, of whatever dynasty he might be, been looked up to

as a father, while he has professed to govern his subjects as children.

This feature in the Chinese government is clearly unfolded both in their ritual and criminal code. In them an exact parallel is drawn between the relations in which every person stands to his own parents, and to the emperor. He suffers similar punishments for similar offences against both; he mourns, and goes unshaved, for the same period, at the death of both; and both possess similar power over his person. Hence he is bred up to civil obedience, though at the expense of his liberty; and the state has reason to expect that he will prove a quiet subject, because he has been trained in the restraints put upon him.

That the people may be conversant with the duties they owe to their parents, elders, and emperor, it is ordained that the magistrates should read, on the days corresponding to the new and full moon, some portions of the book of Sacred Instructions in public. This book is addressed to the people; and how well calculated it is to teach at least the moral of obedience, the annexed extracts will show. Teaching them duty in general, it says:—"In our general conduct, not to be orderly is to fail in our duty; in serving our sovereign, not to be faithful is to fail in filial duty; in acting as a magistrate, not to be careful is to fail in filial duty; in the intercourse of friends, not to be sincere is to fail in filial duty; in arms and in war, not to be brave is to fail in filial duty." Duty thus makes up the sum of life; and the same principle is observable in the claims of elders, which are thus enforced:—"The duty to parents and the duty to elders are indeed

similar in obligation; for he who can be a pious son, will also prove an obedient younger brother; and he who is both, will, while at home, prove an honest and orderly subject, and in foreign service a faithful and courageous soldier. Mencius has said, 'Were all men to honour their kindred and respect their elders, the world would be at peace.'

The assertion that has been made, that the fundamental principle of the Chinese government is "enforced by positive laws," may be illustrated by the narration of a case which occurred in one of the central provinces—a case which shows that the state deems it necessary to treat domestic rebellion with the same severity as treason, supposing them to be allied in principle. A man, aided by his wife, had severely beaten his mother; and this being reported to the viceroy at Peking, it was determined to punish them in a signal manner, in order to enforce the fundamental principle of the empire. And so it happened. The principal offenders were put to death; the mother of the wife was bamboosed and exiled; the scholars of the district were not permitted to attend the public examination for three years; the magistrates were deprived of their office and banished; the house in which the offenders lived was razed to its very foundations; and the spot where the offence occurred was anathematized, or made accursed. This punishment took place under the sanction, and by the command, of an imperial edict, which concluded thus:—"If there be any rebellious children, who oppose, beat, or degrade their parents, they shall be punished in like manner. If ye people, indeed, know the

renovating principle, then fear and obey the imperial will, nor look on this as an empty declamation. For now, according to this case of Teng-chien, whenever there are the like, I resolve to condemn them, and from my heart strictly charge you to beware. I instruct the magistrates of every province severely to warn the heads of families, and elders of villages; and on the second and sixteenth of every month to read the Sacred Instructions, in order to show the importance of the relations of life, that persons may not rebel against their parents. I intend to render the empire filial."

When it is considered that this edict was addressed to a population estimated at three hundred millions, there appears to be something in the latter assertion bordering upon the ludicrous. But however that may be, the Chinese must be looked upon as a "filial" people. Taught by their sacred books, the writings of their moralists, the edicts of their emperors, and the enforcements of law, they are generally obedient to their parents and to their sovereign. Disobedient children there may be, and turbulent subjects, but these form the exception rather than the rule; the majority have learned, and practise, the lesson of obedience. Else, with the physical power which such a mass of human beings must possess, how could the rulers of China enjoy the blessing of peace?

The practical wisdom displayed in the enforcement of obedience to parents by the Chinese government, is a matter for admiration. It may, indeed, only have been adopted out of policy, or as the means to an end, but the effect is the

same. It is the state teaching a great moral principle; and its instructions have a salutary effect. By it the young not only respect their parents, but their elders; and men of all ages and classes, thus trained to practical obedience, with some exceptions only, become willing subjects.

Admiration of this fundamental principle of the Chinese government, however, has its limits. The end to which it is made the means is one of doubtful good. Unhappily, indeed, under the endearing name of a patriarchal and paternal government, China is the beau-ideal of despotism. By it, one man only, the emperor, possesses authority; and he uses that authority frequently to evil purposes—purposes which have a debasing influence over the minds of his subjects. When he uses it to the promotion of social peace and order, then he acts in the spirit of a wise ruler; but when he makes it an instrument of his own deification, and the consequent degradation of his subjects, then he perverts it to an evil purpose: and that he does do this, is fully shown in a previous chapter, “THE COURT OF CHINA.”

Notwithstanding, amidst all his despotism and high pretensions, the Chinese emperor, through his organ the government, is not unmindful of his duties. Having thus effected social peace and order, he employs it to the promotion of the very best of all possible preventives of commotion, that of cheerful industry. Under his fostering care agriculture, trade, and commerce flourish, and the people are left to possess their full share of the results of their labour. The surest proof of this

is the characteristic cheerfulness with which the Chinese proceed to their daily toil; and which is so marked, that it never fails to excite the attention of travellers to that country.

Another good effect of the social peace and order promoted by the government of China, is the universal diffusion of intelligence and education through the lower classes. Notwithstanding the empire consists of so many millions, almost every man can read and write sufficiently for the ordinary purposes of life. Education is, in truth, inculcated by the government; for one of the discourses in the book of Sacred Instructions, which is read to the people, inculcates the necessity of a general acquaintance with the penal laws, and these penal laws are printed and distributed among the people. The discourse in question argues, that as men cannot properly be punished for what they do not know, so they will be less liable to incur the penalty if they are made duly acquainted with the prohibition. Education, therefore, is made by the Chinese the means of "preventive justice;" and it is, upon every principle of reason, humanity, and sound principle, preferable to "punitive justice." Evil can only be prevented by a man possessing a just notion of its consequences.

This appears to be the general sentiment of the Chinese; and this is enforced upon the parent's notice by the government. Every parent is by law liable to punishment for the crimes of his children at any period of their lives; and he, also, is entitled to rewards for their merits; and hence, influenced by the motives of fear and hope, education is generally promoted. Every town and

village has its public place of instruction, and wealthy families have private tutors. So sensible are the Chinese of the importance of education, that their language abounds with maxims having reference to its utility, such as, "Bend the mulberry tree when young;" and, "Without education no governors can be obtained for the people."

It is all these circumstances combined, the latter of which are but ramifications of the first principle of government, that have produced the general harmony which prevails among the Chinese. Influenced by them, they seem to have acquired a general horror of political disorder; a feeling which may be heightened by the recollection of the evils produced by anarchy in former ages. A common maxim among them is, "Better be a dog in peace, than a man in anarchy;" and they observe that, "The worst of men are fondest of change and commotion, hoping that they may thereby benefit themselves; but by adherence to a steady, quiet system, affairs proceed without confusion, and bad men have nothing to gain." It is to this soul-pervading sentiment, perhaps, that the cause must be looked for as engendering this effect; namely, that amidst all the internal revolutions of China, no single instance has occurred of an attempt to change the form of the patriarchal government. Whenever anarchy has prevailed, it has been for the destruction of a tyrant; or when the country was divided into several states, because one man sought the acquisition of universal power. Change of rule might be sought, but never change of principle. Satisfied with the means of acquiring a livelihood and a competency, the Chinese have always opposed

national changes, from the aristocracy down to the meanest peasant. All seem to be deeply convinced that their interest is concerned in the maintenance of the state of things as they exist, and hence they are averse to any innovations.

Even if this feeling did not exist, policy has upreared such obstacles in the way of change, as could not easily be overcome. In order to strengthen the hands of government, it has drawn a strong line of demarcation between its officers and the people. All, from the highest state minister to the meanest soldier, are by their situations interested in upholding the existing order of things, since all they have, and all they hope to have, is derived from the emperor. Statesmen, soldiers, and scholars, alike, can only look to the court for honours and emoluments; whence they present a formidable front to every aggression. The very aristocracy of the country is official, and not hereditary, whence they are ever looking to the throne for favours; and if that throne was utterly subverted, their expectations would be cut off. Besides, all rank of consequence is determined by talent, the test of which is afforded by public examinations, which are open to the poorest persons; menial servants, comedians, and the lowest agents of the police excepted: and the multitude, therefore, are encouraged, as well as officials, to seek for promotion at the hands of the emperor.

Another barrier thrown in the way of change by the government of China, is by its adopting an extensive system of surveillance. The actions of all the officers are mutually watched, and their merits or demerits represented to their

superiors. Thus a sword is ever suspended over their heads, and they are careful not to cut the thread by which it hangs, lest their lives should be endangered. But this system, while it promotes watchfulness, and guards the throne, works for evil. Knowing that if they are detected in any error they will certainly suffer for it, deceit and prevarication become the order of the day, that punishment may be avoided.

This system of surveillance, however, and the line of demarcation drawn between the officers and the people, are adopted as a means of guarding the throne of the present dynasty, and not as the essential principles of government. To the same end, civilians are not allowed to hold a place in their native province; and high officers are frequently removed from one station to another, raised and degraded, summoned to appear before the throne, and again dismissed. The principal authority, moreover, is divided between two grandees, independent and frequently jealous of each other, so that it would be extremely difficult for a party to be formed in the provinces of sufficient strength to overthrow the supreme government.

The exact position which the emperor of China holds in the state has been fully shown. His principal ministers form the Nuy-kō, or "interior council chamber;" and the chief counsellors, who bear the titles of Choong-t'hang and Kō-laou, are four in number, two Tartars, and two Chinese; the former taking the precedence. Below these are a number of assessors, who, with them, form the council of state. All these are selected from the Imperial or Han-lin college. Besides the supreme council, there is the Keun-ky-tā-chin, a

body of privy counsellors, who are employed when secrecy and despatch are required.



MANDARINS OF THE FIRST, SECOND, AND SIXTH CLASSES.

For the conduct of government business in detail, the Leapoo, or Six Boards, are established at Peking. These are, 1. The Board of Official

Appointments, which takes cognizance of the conduct of all civil officers. 2. The Board of Revenue, which regulates all fiscal matters. 3. The Board of Rites and Ceremonies. 4. The Military Board. 5. The Board of Criminal Jurisdiction; and 6. The Board of Public Works. All these have subordinate offices under them, as will be seen in the chapter on "THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE CHINESE," to which a description of these various boards more properly belongs.

Apart from these boards and dependent offices, there are two other establishments; namely, the *Lyfân-yuen*, or "Office for Foreign Affairs," which has the charge of the external relations of the empire, and the presidents of which always consist of Manchow or Mongol Tartars; and the *Too-châ-yuen*, or "Office of Censors," of which the members are generally styled *Yu-shê*. This latter office will serve to remind the reader of the palmy times of ancient Rome, when censors were appointed to remind the citizens of their duties. But the title is deceiving. There is no analogy between the duties of the censors of Rome and the censors of China. The latter, in fact, are a people who pry officially into other men's affairs, for which they are rewarded by government with pay and high-sounding titles; albeit they are mere spies. The members consist, in all, of about forty or fifty, of which several are sent to various parts of the empire, while others remain in the vicinity of the court. There are two presidents, a Tartar and a Chinese; and, by the ancient custom of the empire, they are all privileged to present any advice or remonstrance to the emperor without fear of punishment; not-

withstanding, they are frequently degraded or punished for freedom of speech.

Such are the principal organs of the government at Peking; and the provincial government in its whole, as well as parts, is formed on the same model. Every governor is an emperor in his sphere; but there is this wide difference between them—instead of being responsible only to Heaven, the governors of provinces have to give an account to the emperor.

The provinces are either placed singly under a governor, or two provinces together are made subject to a general governor, who has two common governors under him. Thus Canton, and Kuáng-sy, are under a general governor, who is commonly called the viceroy of Canton. In each of these governments there is a chief criminal judge, and a treasurer, the latter of whom usually takes cognizance of civil suits. The separate cities and districts of each province in the three ranks of Foo, Chow, and Hien, are under the charge of their respective magistrates, who take their rank from the cities they govern.

The duties of a governor are very onerous. He is, indeed, responsible for the welfare and peace of the community over which he presides, and if any disturbance or rebellion takes place, he is never forgiven. Thus, the governor of Canton received signal marks of imperial favour in 1831; but he was ruined the next year, by the rebellion of some mountaineers in the north-west, though no blame could be attached to his administration. Once in every three years, the governor of each province is compelled to forward to the Board of Civil Appointments at Peking, the

name of every officer under his government, with remarks on their conduct and character, supplied by the immediate superiors of each; and, according to his report, every one is exalted or degraded so many degrees. The offences of governors are tried by imperial commissioners, appointed by the emperor for the special purpose.

The several degrees of both civil and military officers are distinguished by the colour of the ball which they wear at the point of their conical caps, and which are usually red, light blue, dark blue, crystal, white stone, and gold. These balls, however, are not infallible signs of the rank of the wearer, for the privilege of wearing them may be purchased. This is frequently done by the wealthy, as, in case of a breach of the law, it protects them from being punished on the spot, or till they have been legally deprived of the ball. But it does not prove the means of a long delay of punishment, for the process of depriving them of it is very summary. This done, the consequences of their dereliction soon follow; for the principle of the penal code of China may be exemplified by a common saying, applied to hasty parents in the correction of their offspring:—"It is but a word and a blow, and sometimes the blow first."

The practical portion of the penal code of China is divided under six heads, corresponding to the six supreme boards at Peking, thus:—

1. The division concerning the administration of civil offices, answers to the Board of Civil Appointments. Its two books treat of the system of government, and of the conduct of officers.

2. This division comprehends fiscal and statistical laws, and corresponds to the Board of

Revenue. It consists of seven books, which comprise the enrolment of the people, lands and tenements, marriage, public property, duties and customs, private property, and sales and markets.

3. The third division treats of the ritual laws, and coincides with the Board of Rites and Ceremonies. It consists of two books, which treat of sacred rites, and miscellaneous observances.

4. This division relates to military laws, thereby answering to the Military Board. It contains five books, which treat of the protection of the palace, the regulation of the army, the protection of the frontier, military horses and cattle, and expresses and public posts.

5. The fifth division comprehends criminal laws, corresponding to the board of punishments. It comprises eleven books, the principal heads of which are treason, robbery, theft, murder, homicide, criminal intercourse, disturbing graves, quarrelling and fighting, and incendiarism.

6. This last division of the code treats of public works, and corresponds to the Board of Public Works. It contains only two books, which relate to public buildings, and public ways.

This methodical and lucid arrangement proves that it is an efficient engine for the control of the multitudinous population of China. The penal code of this country is very arbitrary. Thus, it is constantly meddling with relative duties, whether as regards the living or the dead; and it pays such a minute attention to trifles, as makes it burdensome to its administrators. It is also notorious for the gross injustice and unrelenting cruelty which mark all its provisions against the crime of treason. Every species of advantage

and protection afforded to other criminals, though these are but slight compared with those in European countries, is taken away from a traitor, and he is sure to die. Nor himself alone: in 1803, the life of the emperor was attempted by a single assassin; and while he was condemned to a lingering death, his sons, who were of a tender age, were strangled. Thus, the innocent, contrary to the principles of all reason and humanity, are made to suffer with the guilty. And this despotic law is even sanctioned by their sacred books. In them Confucius enjoins a son "not to live under the same heaven with the slayer of his father;" and this rule is made to extend to the sovereign.

The extent of the punishment for particular crimes is clearly defined in the penal code, and the administrators of the law dare not go beyond the definition. So far the offender is protected from injustice. He is, however, rarely permitted to escape unscathed; for the government, jealous of its authority, and fearing that the subject might derive too much protection from the distinct statement of crime and punishment, has issued the following enactment:—"Whoever is guilty of improper conduct, and such as is contrary to the spirit of the laws, though not a breach of any specific article, shall be punished with at least forty blows; and when the impropriety is serious, with eighty blows." It may be truly said of the Chinese, therefore, that when they are once enclosed in the net of the law, it is difficult for them to make their escape.

The minor punishments among the Chinese are by the bamboo, whose dimensions are exactly defined, and the blows of which are administered

according to the nature of the offence ; the kea, or cangue, which has been called the wooden collar, and is a species of walking pillory ; temporary banishment to a distance not exceeding fifty leagues from the prisoner's home ; and exile beyond the Chinese frontier, either temporary or during life. The three capital punishments are strangulation, beheading, and a mode of execution called ling-chy, which means literally "a disgraceful and lingering death." The application of these modes of punishment sometimes savours of despotism. Thus robbery, with the preconcerted use of weapons, is punished with death, however small the amount may be which the robber has taken. Thus, also, killing in an affray, without reference to any intent, either expressed or implied, is punished with strangulation.

In the law of homicide there is a remarkable incongruity, which could only have been engendered by that principle on which the government is founded ; namely, patriarchal authority. While this law almost exculpates the parent from crime if he kills his children, whether accidentally or intentionally, it denounces the penalty of death upon children who strike or curse their parents. This absolute power bestowed upon fathers is, doubtless, productive of much evil ; and if natural feeling did not generally prove a sufficient security against its abuse, China would thereby present an awful spectacle of homicide to the world. As it is, fathers have virtually the power of life and death over their children.

The prisons of China are very severe, and they are frequently made the instruments of judicial injustice in prolonged imprisonments. The

Chinese emphatically style them *ty-yö*, or "nell;" and their horror of them is such, that it has a tendency to deter them from crime. Their severity is increased by the confinement being solitary, of which the Chinese, who are a social people, have an instinctive dread. Women are rarely confined in these miserable abodes, they being generally allowed the exemption of being placed as criminals in the custody of their nearest relations, who are answerable for their appearance at the tribunal of justice. At this tribunal the whole of the vast population of China are liable to be arraigned, except ten privileged classes, who are either in relationship to the imperial line, or in high character and station. These, except in the case of treason, when the exemption is not allowed, cannot be either tried or punished without a special reference to the emperor. In giving evidence, oaths are never required, but severe punishments are attached to falsehood. When any one exhibits a reluctance to give evidence, a species of torture is employed to force it from him; that is, the ankles or fingers are squeezed between two sticks tied triangularly. Torture, however, is forbidden to be exercised on persons above seventy, or under fifteen years of age, as also on those labouring under permanent disease.

The severity of the penal code of China appears chiefly in those cases wherein the safety of the emperor, or the stability of the government, is involved. Apart from these, benevolent traits are sometimes discernible. Thus, in order to promote kindred and domestic ties, it is provided that relatives and servants living under the same roof shall, in ordinary cases, be held innocent,

though they conceal the offences of their fellow inmates, or assist in effecting their escape : but this benevolence ceases in the enactments relative to slaves. To them the law affords less protection than to a free subject. Every offence is aggravated or diminished in its penalty, according as it is committed by a slave towards a freeman, or a freeman towards a slave. Thus, if a slave kills his master, he is punished with a lingering death, as a traitor ; but if a master kills his slave, the crime is not even made capital.

The penal code of China, therefore, cannot be said to be founded upon the strict rules of equity and justice. If in some respects it exhibits practical wisdom, in others it appears eminently calculated to keep the multitude in awe. Its defects and excesses are those inherent in all despotisms ; for they evidently arise from the first and last principle of the government, which declares that one man shall rule, the rest obey.

That the population of China is comparatively happy and secure under its administration, is universally attested by those who have visited that country. Sir George Staunton, speaking of his colleague in the commission of the last British embassy, says :—" His extensive acquaintance with Persia and India renders him a peculiarly competent judge of comparative merit in this case. He pronounces China superior to the other countries of Asia, both in the arts of government, and the general aspects of society ; and adds, that the laws are more generally known, and more equally administered ; that those examples of oppression, accompanied with infliction of barbarous punishment, which offend the eye and distress the feelings

of the most hurried traveller in other Asiatic countries, are scarcely to be met with in China ; that the proportion which the middling orders bear to the other classes of the community appeared considerable ; and that, compared with Turkey, Persia, and parts of India, an impression was produced highly favourable to the comparative situation of the lower orders."

The Chinese themselves appear to be generally satisfied with their lot, and even to felicitate themselves that they were born in China. Thus one of them wrote these complacent reflections :— "I felicitate myself that I was born in China. It constantly occurs to me, that I might have been born beyond the sea in some remote part of the earth, where the cold freezes, or the heat scorches ; where the people are clothed with the leaves of plants, eat wood, dwell in the wilderness, lie in holes in the earth, are far removed from the converting maxims of the ancient kings, and are ignorant of the domestic relations. Though born as one of the race of men, I should not have been different from a beast. But happily I have been born in China. I have a house to live in, and have drink, food, commodious furniture, clothing, and caps, and infinite blessings ! Truly, the highest felicity is mine !"

If, Christian reader, the Chinese feel called upon to felicitate themselves that they are born in a country where they can peaceably enjoy the blessings of life, without making any reference to eternity, how much more cause have you for self-congratulation ! You are born in a country where you can not only enjoy liberty and prosperity, in a far higher degree than the Chinese, but where

ou have abundant religious privileges. See that ou are grateful for this high and inestimable advantage. Cast your eyes upon heathen China—land groaning under the iron fetters of superstition—and say: “I felicitate myself that I was *not* born in China. I might have been; and these knees, which now are permitted to kneel at a throne of grace, might now be bowing before its dumb idols. But happily I have been born in England! I have God for my Father; Jesus Christ for my Redeemer; and the Holy Spirit for my Guide and Comforter, as I journey onwards to the eternal mansions prepared for me, in common with all true Christians, in heaven. Truly I may say with the psalmist:—

The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance and my cup :
 Thou maintainest my lot.
 The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places ;
 Yea, I have a goodly heritage.” Psal. xvi. 5, 6.

When you have addressed these praises to God, breathe also a prayer that the poor world-seeking and superstitious Chinese may one day enjoy your privileges; that the millions now ranged under the banners of the great dragon may bow to the sceptre of Christ. The true Christian knows no selfish motive; saved himself, he desires the salvation of the whole human race.



CHAPTER V.

THE INSTITUTIONS AND TRIBUNALS OF THE CHINESE.

ALLUSION has been made in the previous pages to the public institutions and tribunals of the Chinese. In order that the reader may fully understand their nature, a brief description of each will now be given.

THE IMPERIAL CABINET AND PRIVY COUNCIL.

In the imperial cabinet of China there are four principal members, who are alternately Mantchoo Tartars and Chinese; and two assistants, who bear the title of *Kolaou*, "ancients of the chamber," or, *Pae-seang*, "respectful assistants." To these ministers the emperor has recourse in all state affairs. Every matter, whether spiritual or temporal, is submitted to their deliberation; though, in most instances, they simply re-echo the emperor's sentiments. Notwithstanding, he never acts without them, either as priest or sovereign; whence they may be justly considered to hold the most exalted situation in the state.

The members of the imperial cabinet are generally men grown gray in the service of their country. They are selected for their supposed experience and wisdom. Many, after having served their country faithfully, have been degraded to private soldiers, and obliged to stand sentinel before the same hall where they have sat in deliberation with their sovereign, to decide on the fate of the empire. It is from the part of the build-

ings in which they sit that their rank is determined, as is that of other officers. Thus the hall in which the emperor gives audience to them is to the left of the palace, and is deemed the most honourable place. It is thought that the emperor could not honour them more than by letting them hold their tribunals in this apartment. Yet, even here, in the highest position in the empire of China, they are frequently taught that lesson, which the wise man gathered from all created things, that, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit."

There is another body of men in the imperial cabinet, whose duties are similar to those of the prime ministers. These consist of six Tartars, and four Chinese, some of whom are sent as governor-generals into the provinces, and residents in the colonies. They read the extracts of public documents, write the answers, and put the seals upon them. Another board of officers, consisting of four Mantchoos, two Mongols, and two Chinese, examine the translation of documents, and transmit them to their proper quarters.

Next in rank to these are the superintendents of the treasure, the keepers of records, accountants, various chambers of secretaries, and heralds; amounting to more than five hundred mandarins and clerks, to each of whom is assigned an appointed sphere of business, so that no delay may be occasioned even in the most trivial matter. Everything in the cabinet is, indeed, done by rule, and despatch is its characteristic. The law ordains that not a day should pass before each paper is examined, and submitted to the perusal of the sovereign. All death warrants sent to

Pekin for signature are examined by the ministers themselves ; and if anything should serve to exculpate a criminal, it is rendered imperative upon them to bring it forward. So also, when a mandarin is accused of forfeiting his rank, they are bound to discover his former merits, if he had any, which may expiate his subsequent misdeeds. On the other hand, however, if a mandarin, who ought to have been degraded, is still retained, and again transgresses, that minister who pardoned his faults becomes responsible. With the exception of these two cases, the most important business devolves on the secretaries of the ministers, who are permanently attached to their offices.

Frequent changes occur in the imperial cabinet of China. At the same time there is no party spirit displayed, as in European courts. When one officer is dismissed, the others do not resign their seals of office, but proceed at once to choose another, and before night he is installed into his office. This arises from the fact, that the aristocracy all entertain the same notions concerning politics. They are all submissive courtiers ; and the only contest known among them is, who shall prove the most servile to the emperor. The cabinet, however, is the hot-bed of intrigue ; and all its members are secretly at work in order to obtain promotion. The sure road to preferment is to have a friend among the females of the harem ; and this seems to be the chief endeavour of the cabinet ministers, for with such a patron they are safe. Even if they fall, by such intercession they are sure to rise again, and regain the regal favour. And such a vicissitude most of them have experienced. Scarcely one, it has

been asserted, has remained in quiet possession of office for any time, except those who serve as



MANDARIN RECEIVING SEALS OF OFFICE FROM THE EMPEROR.

willing tools of men in power. Intrigue has generally secured their downfall, and by intrigue they have again risen.

The imperial cabinet of China has existed from time immemorial. During the last two reigns another board has been instituted, called the Keung-ke-choo, or privy council, the members of which are selected from the best politicians among the provinces, presidents of the six boards, and favourites, without reference to rank or station. They are called Keun-ky-ta-chin, or "great ministers of the military engine;" because the board consists chiefly of generals, and because its constitution resembles a military council. From the influence of its proceedings, which are enveloped in impenetrable mystery, the privy council may be considered the most powerful board in the whole empire. Its members meet every day at three o'clock to take counsel together, and its decrees, framed under the eye of the monarch, are unalterable. Attached to them are several officers for the despatch of business, as secretaries, recorders, writers, composers, and translators. The whole, however, is unconstitutional, and seems only to have been created for the purpose of supporting the Mantchoo power in China. It is so skilfully arranged, that few facts can escape the notice of the numerous officers belonging to it, and its leading members possess the power of punishing all delinquents. They have even usurped the power of other supreme courts, by deciding every intricate question. Moreover, they have the army entirely under their command, which renders them formidable; and it is only by their recommendation that grandees are retained in office, and able and youthful students exalted. Yet their power is limited. Though compelled to have such a council, the emperor is

careful not to assign them a permanent station. As he selects, so he dismisses them at his pleasure, and whenever it suits his interests. Hence this council, like the cabinet, is full of intrigue, for the exaltation of some, and the degradation of others. An abyss is ever yawning under the feet of its members; and while they are constantly endeavouring to hurl their fellows into it, they tread carefully, lest they should fall into it themselves. But all their care often proves vain. If the whisper of intrigue should cause the emperor to withdraw his favour, their ruin is sealed, unless they have a patron in the harem.

THE BOARD OF CIVIL APPOINTMENTS.

This board, like the other supreme tribunals, is under the direction of two presidents, and four vice-presidents, half of whom are Mantchoo Tartars, and half Chinese. It is a powerful tribunal, and possesses extensive patronage. To its members belong the province of promoting or degrading officers; subject, however, to the approval of the imperial cabinet, privy council, and above all, the emperor.

The board of officers is subdivided into four chambers, each of which has its definite duties to perform. They are thus described:—

1. *Chamber of Official Regulations.*—This chamber consists of five deputy-presidents, four assistant-presidents, and three directors. The duties of these officers are, to attend to the distinction of official classes, the observance of the laws of promotion and degradation, and the presentation of mandarins at court. These, to an European, would seem to be very simple duties;

but it is far otherwise. The shades of difference in rank, in China, are so varied and complicated, that it requires considerable knowledge. For instance, all the mandarins are divided into nine distinct ranks, each subdivided into two, which are marked by the colour and substance of the knobs which they wear on their caps. Then, again, the whole number of civilians, inclusive of the provincial magistrates, is twelve thousand nine hundred and ninety-six; and these being a mixture of Mantchoos, Mongols, and Chinese, it requires an acquaintance, not only with the law of rank, but also with the law of Chinese etiquette. Moreover, the sons of certain officers have a right to promotion to certain civil offices; and there are laws of promotion, by rotation, seniority, and merit, with all of which it is necessary that the members of the chamber of official regulations should be conversant. Finally, nominal ranks are dispensed by its members to the whole body of the people, in order to protect them from the bastinado of the inferior mandarins. Thus, there are merchants of the first degree, and shop-keepers of the eighth or ninth; and these different ranks have each a certain value and sum set upon them by the government; a knowledge of which is indispensably requisite in the retailers of these patents. Hence it will be seen, that the members of this chamber have no slight duties to perform. The latter, perhaps, is the most important; for the sale of patents brings a large amount into the coffers of the government.

2. *Chamber of Investigation.*—The duties of the members comprising this chamber consist in

keeping an account of the merits and demerits of every officer in the empire. These are reported to them by the governors and lieutenant-governors of the provinces, and they are examined once within three years. At the same time a select committee of great ministers and kings is established at the capital, and the guilty are summoned to appear to answer for their crimes. These, or at least some of them, will appear strange to an European reader ; for mandarins are liable to be accused of avarice, cruelty, remissness, idleness, disrespectfulness, old age, incurable disease, levity, and incapacity ; and if any of these charges are proved, they are either dismissed, fined, degraded, or bastinadoed. The more refractory officers are sent to the banks of the Amour, or the table-land of Ele, where they drag boats, or become slaves to the soldiery ; in which situations they pine away their lives, without hope of restoration to lost honours.

The members of the chamber of investigation have to make inquiries as to the merits of officers : whether they have exhorted the people to cultivate the lands, or performed any meritorious actions, such as the capture of murderers and vagabonds, and the putting a stop to law-suits. Those who can lay claim to such merits, are noticed in their pages as deserving promotion ; and the mandarin is soon ushered into the emperor's presence, and rewarded. Rewards, notwithstanding, are never conferred as dues, but as special favours. Because an officer has acted meritoriously, it *pleases* the emperor to have him in honour.

3. *Chamber of Patents* — The members of this

court recommend meritorious officers for obtaining the rank of noblemen, and grant the necessary patents; exercise an inquisitorial surveillance over the members of the lower nobility, and keep an account of their merits or demerits; and control the various courts called *Le-muh*, which, being composed of vicious men, require superintendence.

4. *Chamber of Records*.—The members of this board keep an account of all the officers employed by government. To them, also, belong the duties of granting leave of absence to a mandarin who wishes to return home, either to nourish or to mourn the loss of an aged parent. They keep an account, likewise, of the money and rice delivered to the mandarins of the capital, as well as of that delivered to occasional visitors.

THE BOARD OF REVENUE.

In China there are three distinct treasures:—the imperial, national, and provincial. The imperial treasure is under the sole control of the emperor, but the national and provincial are placed under the care of the board of revenue.

The general control of this court is in the hands of two presidents and four vice-presidents. The court itself is divided into fourteen chambers, each of which has the superintendence of one or two provinces; the object of which is to examine narrowly into the provincial accounts, and to insist upon the regular delivery of tribute. The treasure is under the immediate control of a Mantchō Tartar, who is a friend of the monarch. c It contains three deposits: one of silver; another of

cotton and silk piece-goods ; and a third of metals, wax, stationery, and all such articles as are sent from the provinces as tribute.

To the office of the board of revenue, deputy-presidents, a superintendent of the mint, another of the manufacture of cash, and numerous assistants, are attached. A committee, consisting of two vice-presidents and other officers, examines into the annual receipts and expenditure, the provisions for the military, the transport of grain, and the condition of the granaries. This court is again divided into four other departments ; the first of which attends to the receipt of money and rice ; the second to the transportation of revenue ; the third to the expenditure ; and the fourth to the supplies furnished to the public servants, and illustrious foreigners while at court.

. Connected with the board of revenue there is also a treasurer in each of the provinces, who has under him a number of officers for the collection of revenue, somewhat after the manner of the Board of Excise in England, which has its collectors, supervisors, and common excisemen, in certain districts throughout the kingdom.

The lands of the peasantry of China are all rated, and a careful census of the population taken. In order to facilitate the collection of taxes, every village is divided into five and ten families ; and the grain is either received at the public offices, or gathered by revenue officers. When collected, it is transported from the Heën and Foo to the public granaries, and either used in the province, or sent, part to the capital, and part to a neighbouring district to supply the wants of the military. After it is delivered, the provincial treasurer

gives in his account to the governor, and he forwards it to the board of revenue.

In no branch of the administration in China does there appear to be so much fraud and deception practised, as in the collection of the revenue. Notwithstanding the board has the power of punishing mandarins for embezzlements, the public money is frequently squandered, additional sums are extorted, and the meanest tricks are resorted to in order to embezzle even a few taëls ; and the law proves insufficient to meet the evil. It is applied with vigour ; but still the evil not only exists, but increases in magnitude. The rule among the Chinese appears to be, that a man should cheat when he has the opportunity.

The board of revenue watches over the weights and measures, as well as the revenue of China. The weights are nearly the same throughout the empire, but measures vary considerably, and especially those of quantity. In this department similar difficulties are encountered as in the collection of tribute, the same rule of cheating being observed by the Chinese universally. Their ideas of right and wrong are so perverted, and the natural bent of the human heart being to selfishness and unrighteousness, it follows that each one endeavours to impose upon the government and his neighbours. It is true, the pages of Confucius inculcate the duty of paying tribute to the emperor, and of acting towards neighbours in the same manner as they would wish to be treated by them ; but his precepts have little practical influence upon this idolatrous people. A man, to be restrained from evil, must have the fear of God before his eyes, and a dread of the eternal conse-

quences of sin. With these the Chinese are utterly unacquainted. Their dread is only of the laws of the realm ; and if these can be evaded successfully, they neither fear its terrors, nor the consequences of evil-doing. Hence arise the fraud and deception practised in the payment of tribute to the government, and in dealings with their neighbours.

BOARD OF RITES.

This board has the same number of presidents and vice-presidents as the preceding. It is subdivided into four chambers ; the first of which is charged with maintaining the rules of etiquette, the second with the order of sacrifices, the third with the duties of visitors and guests, and the fourth with the rules of festivities and rejoicings.

1. *The Chamber of Etiquette*.—In this chamber there are two deputy-presidents, four assistants, and two directors. Under its control, also, is a subordinate department, which attends to the mint. The duties of its members are, to superintend public audiences ; the ceremonials of the classical repast, or symposium of the literati ; the ceremony of the emperor ploughing the field, and the regulations pertaining thereto ; laws of precedence ; ceremonial of marriages ; rituals of the schools ; ceremony of visiting ; ceremony of the military ; ceremonial of public rejoicing ; ritual of sacrifices ; ceremonial of burial ; ceremonies for admitting barbarian tribute-bearers, and various other ceremonies, on which it would be tedious to dwell. As for the ceremonies themselves, they consist of repetitions of genuflexion, prostration, and rising and falling down on the face, so as to

knock their heads on the floor. This is at least the custom in audiences, where a host of slaves, gorgeously dressed, crouch in chequered rows before the emperor, and adore him as a divinity. Scarcely one word is heard among them, except the voices of the masters of the ceremony, who give the word of command for particular movements, as an European officer does to the soldiers under him ; and all this is done amid the unmusical sound of the Chinese gong.

2. *Chamber for regulating Sacrifices.*—The number of officers in this chamber is nearly the same as in that of the preceding department ; and their duties consist in attending on joyful and solemn occasions. Sacrifices are of three kinds, the great, middling, and inferior ; and each officer has peculiar rites, formalities, and victims to superintend ; and these are manifold.

3. *Chamber of mutual Intercourse.*—In this chamber there are four interpreters' offices, and a variety of other establishments. They are established for the accommodation and entertainment of illustrious foreign guests. Thus, the officers belonging to this establishment are charged with attending to their supplies during their stay at court. Nor is this a trifling duty ; for the concourse of ambassadors at the court of China is greater than at any other. All the princes of Mongolia, Tibet, Sungaria, Kokonor, and other central parts of Asia, either appear in person, or send their envoys, to acknowledge their allegiance to the great king.

4. *Chamber for arranging Festivities.*—Connected with this chamber are two deputy-presidents, one assistant, two directors, and various

controllers, managers, and clerks. Their duties are to arrange the imperial banquets, which are given in great state; and when it is considered that the guests are frequently numerous, and that they are placed, like the dishes before them, according to rule, this will not appear a trifling matter. It is the duty of these officers, also, to furnish rations to the Mongol and other foreign visitors immediately connected with the court.

5. *The Board of Music*.—In connexion with the board of rites there are a number of musicians, who are present at every ceremonial. All these are celebrated for their skill in music, according to the taste of the Chinese, though their performances are most discordant to the ears of Europeans. At the sacrifices, in the court, and at public festivals, their music is accompanied with vocal harmony, which adds very little to the effect. On these occasions the musicians are placed in regular order. Thus, those who play the drum and the fife are turned to the left, with their faces to the west; and those who perform on flutes, organs, and guitars, to the right, with their faces toward the east. When they strike up, or stop, the ceremonial either changes or ceases; and the scene is altered, as though a drama was being performed; and this is the case both on joyful and solemn occasions. Musicians are in requisition at every ceremony; even the dead are buried amidst the sound of the trumpet and the beating of the inharmonious gong.

THE MILITARY BOARD.

This board consists of two presidents and two vice-presidents, who have, in conjunction with the commanders of the household troops, the

highest military functions in the empire. They have also the control over the armies, both in the capital and the provinces, as well as the choice, promotion, and degradation of officers. The board is divided into four chambers, thus :—

1. The chamber for the appointment of officers, and the despatch of orders.

2. The chamber for providing charts of the country; the distribution of the garrison; the investigation of crimes and merits; and the bestowment of rewards and punishments.

3. The chamber for superintending the posts, and providing horses for the cavalry soldiers.

4. The chamber for superintending the stores, and the examination of candidates for military service.



GROUP OF CHINESE SOLDIERS.

The Chinese government has thus apparently provided for an effectual army, sufficient to quell all internal rebellions and meet external foes. But

the reverse is the actual fact. The Chinese army is more a skeleton than a living body. Nearly the whole of the cavalry exists only on paper; and what does exist is nearly useless. The soldier, moreover, is not trained to fight for his country, but as a police runner, and an imperial hunter. During the greater part of the year he lives as a husbandman, or is engaged in trade, like the great body of the people; and hence he is unskilled in the art of war. The term which an old writer applied to the nations conquered by Alexander, namely, that they were "men of straw," may, in strict propriety, be applied to the Chinese. Even bands of robbers and pirates have proved too strong for the force of the whole empire. Thus, in 1833, the present emperor issued this manifesto, which shows the weakness of the Chinese, at least, as regards their navy:— "According to the ancients, civilians need rubbing whilst governing a nation, and the military no less require a brushing. Government appoints soldiers for the protection of the people, and sailors are not less important to the public safety. But the navy has lately fallen off, which appears from many cases of failure on the high seas. On shore, the abilities of a man are measured by his archery and horsemanship; but the talent of a sailor is known by his ability to fight *with* and *on* the water. A sailor must know the winds and the clouds, and the lands and the passages amongst the sands. He must be able to break a spear with the wind. Like a divinity, he must know how to plough the billows, handle a ship, and be always in order for action. Then when his spears are thrown, they will pierce, and his

guns will follow to give them effect. The spitting tornados of gunpowder will then reach the mark, and whenever pirates are met with, they will be wondrously vanquished. No aim will miss its mark. Pirates will be impoverished and crippled; and even on the high seas, when they take to flight, they will be followed, caught, and destroyed. Thus the monsters of the deep and the waves will be still, and the sea become a calm without a ripple. But far different from this has of late been the fact. The navy is a nihility! There is a name of going to sea, but there is no going in reality. Cases of piracy are frequently occurring, and even barbarian ships anchor in our inner seas with impunity. I look back on the past, and harbour dismal forebodings for the future!" Recent events have, doubtless, strengthened the emperor of China's opinion as to the "nihility," not only of his navy, but his army. They have discovered his weakness, and proved that his subjects are mere grown-up children.

THE BOARD OF PUNISHMENTS.

This board numbers two presidents, and two vice-presidents. Under these there are eighteen chambers, each of which has two deputy-presidents, four assistants, two directors, and a number of clerks and petty officers.

These different chambers attend to all the prisons and appeals of their respective provinces, the confirmation and alteration of sentences, and the regulation of fines and mulcts. For the trials of the most important criminal cases, however, the members of the censorate and of the judicial

court are consulted. The censorate will be hereafter described. The judicial court is in intimate connexion with the board of punishments, and will be now noticed.

The Judicial Court.—The officers of this court are two presidents, two vice-presidents, six controllers, three over each of its chambers, and a great number of subordinate officers. Their duties are to revise the lists of those condemned to death, and minutely to investigate the accusations. No criminal can be executed by the provincial governments, unless the members of this tribunal agree with the officers of the board of punishments. The object of this institution is, in fact, to save the lives of any one unjustly condemned to die. But the whole seems to be more theory than otherwise, for the real power of life and death is in the hands of the emperor.

THE BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS.

This board has the same number of presidents and vice-presidents as the preceding. It is subdivided into four chambers, thus:—

1. *The Chamber of Architecture.*—With the Chinese, architecture is more the art of imitation than invention. It requires no genius, for every building is erected by rule. A model is given; and the more slavish the adherence to that model, the greater the perfection of the building is considered. It does not matter what the building may be. Cities, palaces, temples, walls, granaries, and common houses, are all built after their respective models, in which shape they have been erected for ages.

2. *Chamber of Government Stores.*—The duties

of the officers of this chamber are to preserve all precious articles, and to provide every requisite for a camp.

3. *Chamber of Hydraulics*.—This is a very important department. At all times it has works of the greatest magnitude under its control, such as, raising and repairing dikes, irrigating the rice fields, repairing canals and the high roads, and building of the grain junks and men of war. This chamber is also entrusted with the care of the ice cellars at Peking, which is one of the largest establishments of the court; and with making proper covers for books, and folding the documents and records of the court in yellow silk.

4. *Chamber for Mausoleums*.—This chamber is charged with the task of building and repairing the graves, not only of the imperial family, but of meritorious officers who are buried at the public charges. It likewise controls the workmen, and pays them from the treasure at its disposal. Moreover, there is a department called Che-tsaou-koo attached to this board, the members of which superintend the manufactures for the use of the emperor. Jewellery, silks, trinkets, carriages, sedans, and chariots, are all fabricated under the inspection of the members of this department; and they must take care that both the article and the workmanship are of the first order. Nothing is allowed to enter the palace which is not superior to every thing of its kind; and to imitate any thing imperial is accounted high treason.

Such, briefly, is the nature of the six supreme tribunals of the court of China. Each *seems* to be dependent on the other, but all *are* dependent on the sovereign. He it is who in reality rules,

though great power is professedly delegated to the supreme courts. The emperor possesses the substance of power—they, only the shadow.

THE CENSORATE.

From the despotic character of the government of China, one would hardly have expected to have met with an establishment of this nature. Yet such is the fact. Two presidents, a Tartar and a Chinese, and four assistants, with various subordinate officers, constitute this court at the capital; and it is their duty, like the censors of Rome, to exercise strict surveillance over the emperor, the magistracy, and the people. But here the analogy between the censors of Rome and China ends. In that republic they could exercise their functions without danger. Whether they reprovèd, remonstrated, advised, or demanded a redress of grievances at the hands of the magistrates, they were safe. And so it is understood, by the law, that they are in China. It states, that their advice, how contrary soever to the will of his majesty, shall not endanger their lives. But the fact is otherwise. The minds of despots can ill brook restraint; and there are cases on record, in which the censors of China have suffered for the faithful performance of their duties. Hence, this court is altogether changed from its original constitution. Its members, terrified from the path of duty, instead of defending the innocent, and boldly asserting the national privileges, have become the cringing flatterers of the emperor. They have even been such willing tools in his service, as to propose measures for enslaving the people. Notwith-

standing, as custom allows them to speak boldly, they sometimes plead, vituperate, and remonstrate. But here the matter ends. Their pleadings, vituperations, and remonstrances, like all other documents, are placed on record, and there remain unheeded and forgotten. The emperor still acts by the impulse of his own will, and his censors, therefore, exist only in the name. They are a perfect "nihility;" for they neither possess the power of restraining the despotism of the monarch, nor of checking vice among the people.

THE COURT OF REQUESTS.

The court of requests was instituted for the purpose of inspecting all papers, before they are placed in the hands of the great ministers. The chief duty of its members is to see that these papers do not exceed a certain length, or contain one superfluous character. They must also take care that they are worded according to a prescribed rule, and that the characters are properly raised, since on this latter peculiarity the rank of the individual spoken of is known. Moreover, according to an ancient custom, there are officers at the court of requests, in waiting at the gate, to receive accusations upon a given signal. These are either received in writing, or orally, and they are compelled to transmit them immediately to their superiors, on pain of severe punishment.

THE HAN-LIN, OR NATIONAL COLLEGE.

Han-lin College, literally "Pencil Forest Hall," was instituted to perpetuate a system of instruction, for the purpose of upholding the laws of the

empire. It has two presidents, styled learned directors of the hall, a Tartar and a Chinese, the former taking the precedence in rank. There are also twelve officers, six of each class, called "learned readers," the former of whom read sacred books to his majesty, together with a number of other readers and expounders, divested of the title. There are, likewise, many employed in selecting, revising, correcting, and arranging materials for publication. All national works are edited under the direction of this body, and the names of the superior officers are inserted in the prefaces. Other members, from their designation, appear to discharge the duties of superintending proclamations; while others assist at the classical repast, which the emperor gives in the palace. These latter deliver orations, recite epigrams, poems, eulogies, etc., for the entertainment of the emperor and his guests. The orations, however, are not delivered with that pathos which the great master of Grecian eloquence, Demosthenes, pronounced to be the soul of speaking. They are merely read as essays, or as school-boys read their lessons. Connected with this college is the historiographers' court, and another court of a subordinate nature, called the Chen-sze-foo, the duties of which are the same as those of the national college. The historiographers' court consists of twenty-one members, chosen from the national college; and four of these are always in attendance on the monarch to record his words and his actions, like the recorders of the courts of antiquity, of whom we read in the sacred writings. It is their duty, also, to examine the manuals of prayer,

which, together with all proclamations, and the rituals used on festivals, are composed by the Han-lin doctors. The preparation of these documents is a matter of no small importance. Their wording should be accurate, and not a sentence admitted which is unclassical.

It is the professed object of the imperial government to select ministers of state from Han-lin College, according to their degree of literary attainments. For the institution is not a seminary of instruction for the youth of the nation, but a senate to test literary attainments, and confer honorary degrees, which often prove a passport to the most lucrative and influential posts in the empire. Hence, so much importance is attached to the acquisition of these degrees, that vast efforts are made by scholars to pass the examinations with credit. Those who have more money than learning, even purchase these honours, in order that they may obtain high office in the empire. Many of the most learned members of the college, however, spend their lives within its walls, in literary ease. All eminent classical scholars are, by virtue of their attainments, members of the institution; and the descendants of philosophers and sages, such as Confucius and Mencius, are members by birth-right.

In the estimation of the Chinese, the Han-lin are the most learned men in the empire. All their learning, however, resolves itself into that found in their canonical books. Natural history, universal geography, and the elementary sciences generally taught in our schools, are utterly unknown. To be learned in the law of the Chinese ancients,

is all their aim, and all their desire. And they are so proud of these attainments, that they carefully preserve them from the multitude, in order that they may retain their superiority. Their one endeavour is—to keep the mass of the people in that state of ignorance in which they have been for ages, that they may enjoy the sole privilege of expatiating upon the knowledge of the ancients. Hence, the labour and the learning of these Chinese academicians have never influenced the taste of the public. They have issued the lumber of antiquity in folio compilations, answering to those of the middle ages; but this is the sum of the benefit they have conferred upon their country. Nor is it to be expected that they will ever prove beneficial to China. Judging from the past, they will remain secluded for ages yet to come, and leave the task of enlightening their countrymen to foreigners. The emperor may boast that the Chinese will one day enlighten “barbarians;” but the case will be reversed. It will fall to the lot of those whom he deems “barbarians,” to instruct the Chinese in all really solid learning, and especially in that knowledge which appertains to salvation.

OFFICE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

This office has charge of the external relations of the empire. It is constituted in the same manner as the six supreme boards, but the officers are all Mantchoo and Mongol Tartars. The purpose for which it is chiefly instituted is to control the Mongol tribes. It has to regulate their frontiers, their tribute, their appearance at Peking, and the contingent of their troops, etc. But the

duties of the officers are not confined to this particular sphere; for in 1816, one of the presidents was deputed to receive the British embassy. The board is divided into six chambers, thus:—

1. The first chamber is established for conferring ranks and titles upon the nobility, as well as officers of the Mongol tribes.

2. The duties of the second chamber are to regulate the tribute and salary of the Mongol princes, many of whom are related to the emperor by marriage, as before described.

3. The jurisdiction of this chamber extends principally to Tibet, and those tribes which, having no native chiefs, are under the control of Mantchoo officers. It is called “the chamber of demarcation and records,” and it chiefly relates to spiritual affairs. Jealous as the Mongols are of spiritual authority, the emperor of China has overreached them in this particular. Thus, although they have monopolized the incarnations of Budhu,* and have three such at Peking, and ten in Mongolia, the transmigration cannot take place without an order from the emperor. When they require another habitation for Budhu, he directs the lamas that only such a family shall have the honour of furnishing a child for the pur-

* According to the notions of the Mongols, these “incarnations” are gifted with omniscience. Hence they represent them as the vicegerents of supreme power on earth, as ruling over the nations with unbounded authority, and as claiming, in right of it, the profoundest homage. But the whole arises from the most abject knavery of the lamas. The “incarnations” always consist of children, or the most ignorant men, who are only exalted to the rank of divinities that the lamas may rule the country. By the superstitions they teach, they have enslaved the minds of the people, and hence obtained “the fat of the land.”

pose, and this family is sure to be attached to his cause. Hence the emperor triumphs over Budhu; and to make his conquest complete, neither the lamas nor the priests can officiate without an order from the mandarins. From this cause they form a body of men entirely at the service of the government, or the emperor of China.

4. The design of the fourth chamber is for compassionating foreigners. But this must be understood in a limited sense: the Chinese government makes a distinction amongst the "barbarians." Thus, those who come under the transforming influence of the celestial empire are called Fan, or "foreigners;" while the savage inhabitants of the Chinese mountains are denominated inside barbarians; and the English, and other nations, who *know nothing of the principles of civilization*, outside barbarians. By foreigners, in this instance, therefore, must be understood the Kalkas, who, though not subject to Chinese sway, in the true sense of the term, are yet deemed the children of the emperor; whence he establishes for their benefit this "chamber of compassion." Their princes even receive a salary from the imperial treasury.

5. The fifth chamber is established for regulating the affairs of Turkestan; but it does not confer much benefit on that country. Of all the vassals of China, the nobles and the people of Turkestan are the most oppressed by the emperor. Hence they have become a nation of slaves and traitors.

6. This chamber has the control over the criminal jurisdiction of the Mongols. The nobles

may, in ordinary cases, judge their own people; but capital crimes can only be adjudged under the sanction of this board. Even a khan has not power over the life of his subjects, unless they revolt, when he is allowed to punish them with death. Connected with this chamber, there is a treasury for defraying the expenses of the Mongol princes during their stay at Peking.

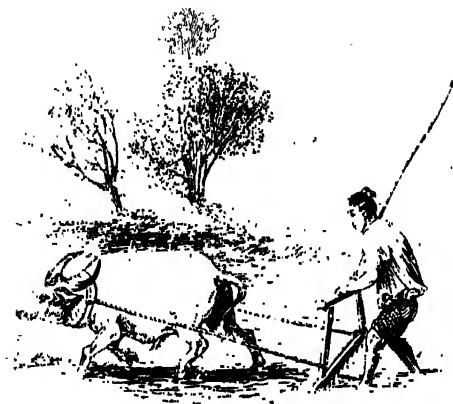
The above comprise the institutions of the Chinese properly so called. In the provinces and colonies there are others, but they are all modelled as much as possible according to the supreme government. The six boards are clearly traceable in the institutions of the towns; and as all are dependent on the supreme courts, whether in the provinces of China or the colonies of Mantchouria, Mongolia, Ele, or Tibet, they do not require description. It will be sufficient to say, that the whole machinery of government is one compact body, and that each part bears some resemblance to the other part.



CHINESE VASES.

CHAPTER VI.

THE AGRICULTURE OF THE CHINESE.



THE HARROWING.

IN all civilized communities, whether ancient or modern, agriculture has been deemed of the highest importance. The ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, alike paid attention to this subject. Perhaps, however, in no nation, whether of ancient or modern times, has the husbandman been held in higher repute than in China. That country is essentially agricultural, and the cultivators of the soil rank next to the cultivators of the mind in national importance. And this is not owing to their skill, but rather to the effects

of their labour. They are diligent and laborious agriculturists, but the science of good husbandry is unknown among the Chinese. This seems to arise from a love of those customs which their forefathers have handed down to them. As they tilled the land, so their descendants resolve to till it, and thus there is no spirit of improvement. Although the nation has existed for several thousand years, the very instruments they use are still those of primitive simplicity.

As in other countries, the chief instrument of the Chinese husbandman is the plough; but the plough in China is a very different thing from that with which Europeans are acquainted, or even that which many of the ancients used.—A Chinese plough simply consists of a beam, handle, and a share, with a wooden stem, and a rest behind, instead of a moulding board. And all this is put together in a very rude manner. It would seem, indeed, as one has observed, that a labourer, tired of plying the spade, resolved to call upon the ox for aid, and for that purpose tied his shovel to a beam: to the one end he attached the docile animal, while he held the other by means of a handle: notwithstanding, it appears to answer his purpose. His only aim is to stir up the soil, or, in other words, to form the soil, manure, and a certain quantity of water, into an equable mixture. Still, were the Chinese to work the plough upon European principles, they would, doubtless, produce more abundant crops; for their present instrument seldom cuts to the depth of four inches; so that they sow from year to year on the same soil, without being able to turn up new earth. But it is the endeavour of the

Chinese government to confirm the people in the love of all antiquated things, if once acknowledged to be useful, without endeavouring to discover a better method.

When the Chinese break up any fallow ground, they use the mattock. With this instrument, also, they clear the corn fields of weeds, root up shrubs, and reduce the soil to a more equable condition of density or compactness. Such appears to have been used among the aborigines of China, as it was among other nations, of which mention is made both in the works of profane authors and the sacred writings. Thus the Latin *sarculum* appears to have been an instrument like the mattocks depicted in Chinese paintings, and those now in use in China; and Isaiah, predicting the fall of Jerusalem by the Assyrians, says:—

“With arrows and with bows shall men come thither;
Because all the land shall become briers and thorns.
And on all hills that shall be digged with the mattock.
There shall not come thither the fear of briers and thorns.”
ISA. vii. 21, 25.

There is considerable propriety in using mattocks in the cultivation of hills, because a spade would not suit the general hardness of the ground, nor serve to uproot the shrubs effectually. These instruments are thus used in China, in what is termed terrace cultivation, a system which exists in hilly districts, but which is not carried to the marvellous extent that has been supposed. On this subject Dr. Abel, who visited the country for botanical purposes, remarks:—
“While passing through the mountainous provinces of the empire, we naturally looked for that

far-famed terrace cultivation, which has led to the notion of China being one vast garden, with hills terraced from the base to the summit. The wild and wooded tracts which were occasionally passed, at length convinced us that they do not often attempt to cultivate a surface naturally sterile or difficult, except in the immediate vicinity of towns; and that the terracing of hills is generally confined to those lower situations, where an accumulation of their degraded surface affords a soil naturally productive."

Another important instrument to the Chinese husbandman is the harrow. This is provided with three rows of teeth, and a handle to support the labourer, who stands upon them to add to their weight. The object of the harrow is similar to that of the plough in China. It is simply to diffuse the soil in water, so as to produce an equable solution, or, in simpler terms, to make mud wherein to plant the rice.

In some parts of the country, the plough is drawn through the soil by human strength; in others, by oxen, asses, and mules, contrary to the laws of humanity, yoked together indiscriminately. In the province of Canton the soil is ploughed by means of a buffalo, of a dark grey colour, which is called by the Chinese *shuey-nen*, or "water-ox," from its propensity for muddy shallows, where it wallows in the mire. When sufficient rain has fallen to allow the rice fields to be laid under water, they are subjected to the plough; the buffalo and his driver wading through the field up to their knees from morning to night.

Preparatory to planting, the rice is sown thickly in some richly-manured corner. It there

germinates in two or three days ; and when about ten inches in height, the young plants are removed to the fields prepared for their reception. The process of transplanting exhibits a perfect division of labour. One person takes up the young shoots and hands them to another, who conveys them to their destination. They are there received by a party of labourers, some of whom dibble holes, into which they drop the plants by sixes, while others follow to settle the earth about the roots. The labour must be any thing but agreeable, for the men are compelled to wade ankle-deep in mud and water, and to preserve a stooping position, till they have completed their task. Use, however, has rendered the work familiar ; and it is said that a man is able, by an ordinary exertion of his powers, to set from twenty to twenty-five plants within the minute. Sir George Staunton also represents, that the Chinese peasantry are better able to support labour, with slight intermission, than the lower classes in Europe, from the circumstance that they are more temperate. For the most part, he says, they are sober men ; and marrying early, they are less liable to corrupt the springs of life by vicious habits.

After the rice is planted, the field is kept watered according as it requires. Any unusual deficiency of water would be fatal to the grain ; and hence the Chinese have provided against that contingency, by furnishing canals and conduits to each field, for the purpose of irrigation. The Chinese excel in their contrivances for raising this water, in the irrigation of their

land ; and it is probable, that the origin of these inventions is very remote. One of these inventions is a species of chain-pump, and is thus described in Staunton's Embassy :—"This pump consists, in the first place, of a hollow trough, of a square make. Flat and square pieces of wood, corresponding to the dimensions of the trough, are fixed to a chain, which turns over a roller, or small wheel, placed at each extremity of the trough. The square pieces of wood fixed to the chain move with it round the rollers, and lift up a volume of water equal to the dimensions of the trough, and are therefore called the lifters. The power used in working this machine is applicable in three different ways. If the machine be intended to lift a great quantity of water, several sets of wooden arms are made to project from various parts of the lengthened axis of the rollers over which the chain and lifters turn. These arms are shaped like the letter T, and made round and smooth, for the foot to rest upon. The axis turns upon two upright pieces of wood, kept steady by a pole stretched across them. The machine being fixed, men, treading upon the projecting arms of the axis, and supporting themselves upon the beam across the uprights, communicate a rotatory motion to the chain, the lifters attached to which draw up a constant and copious stream of water. The chain-pump is applied to the purpose of draining grounds; transferring water from one cistern to another, or raising it to small heights out of rivers or canals. Another method of working this machine is, by yoking a buffalo to a large horizontal wheel,

connected by cogs with the axis of the rollers over which the lifters turn. A small machine of the kind is worked merely by the hand, with the assistance of a trundle and simple crank, such as are applied to a common grindstone, fixed to one end of the axis of the chain-pump. This last



CHINESE IRRIGATION.

method is general throughout the empire. Every labourer is in possession of such a portable machine—an instrument to him not less useful than a spade to an European peasant."

A more simple method of irrigation in China, is the bucket worked by means of a band. Two men lay hold upon two strings, fill the bucket by lowering it into the canal, or conduit, and empty the contents into the field. This process will

serve to remind the reader of a beautiful passage in scripture, which reads thus:—

“He shall pour the water out of his buckets,
And his seed shall be in many waters.”

NUMB. xxiv. 7.

The most ingenious and useful method of irrigating the lands in China, however, is by means of a water-wheel, which is used in rapid rivers, where the chain-pump and the hand method cannot be made available. It has been thus described:—“The wheel, which is turned by the stream, varies from twenty to thirty feet or more in height—according to the elevation of the bank; and when once erected, a constant supply of water is poured by it into a trough on the summit of the river’s side, and conducted in channels to the fields. The props of the wheels are of timber, and the axis is a cylinder of the same material; but every portion of the machine exhibits some modification or other of the bamboo, even to the fastenings and bindings; for not a single nail or piece of metal enters into its composition. The wheel consists of two rims of unequal diameter, of which the one next the bank is rather the least. This double wheel is connected with the axis by sixteen or eighteen spokes of bamboo, obliquely inserted near each extremity of the axis reaching the outer rim, and those proceeding from the exterior extremity of the same axis reaching the inner and smaller rim. Between the rims and the crossings of the spokes is woven a kind of close basket-work, serving as ladle-boards, which are acted upon by the current of the stream, and turn the wheel

round. The whole diameter of the wheel being something greater than the height of the bank, about sixteen or eighteen hollow bamboos, closed at one end, are fastened to the circumference to act as buckets. These, however, are not loosely suspended, but firmly attached with their open mouths towards the inner or smaller rim of the wheel, at such an inclination, that when dipping below the water their mouths are slightly raised from the horizontal position. As they rise through the air, their position approaches the upright sufficiently near to keep a considerable portion of the contents within them; but when they have reached the summit of the revolution, the mouths become enough depressed to pour the water into a large trough placed on a level with the bank to receive it. The impulse of the stream on the ladle-boards at the circumference of the wheel, with the radius of about fifteen feet, is sufficient to overcome the resistance arising from the difference of weight between the ascending and descending, or loaded and unloaded sides of the wheel. This impulse is increased, if necessary, at the particular spot where each wheel is erected, by damming the stream, and even raising the level of the water where it turns the wheel. When the supply of water is not required over the adjoining fields, the trough is merely turned aside or removed, and the wheel continues its stately motion, the water from the tubes pouring back again down its sides."

While some of the Chinese husbandmen are thus employed in irrigating the land, others are dispersed over the field, watching every plant to see if any pernicious weed is growing by its side.

When such is the case, he pulls the seedling from its bed, and plucks away the intruder, after which he replaces it in its proper situation. Despite this practice, however, weeds still spring up, and require the application of the hoe at two successive periods. This instrument is similar to that used in Europe, only it is of a stronger make, and has a short handle, which compels the labourer to stoop very much in the performance of his work.

The rice, which is the staple food in China, is ripe about August or September. Then, invited by its yellow tinges, the reaper puts in his sickle, which is the type of our reaping-hook, and cuts it down. It is cut in the same manner as wheat in England; and still as the reaper lays down the bundles an assistant takes them up, and strikes them upon the sides of a tub, one-half of which is surrounded by a curtain to screen the grain from the impulse of the breeze. This summarily completes the process of threshing. Some kinds of rice, however, cannot be threshed in this manner; whence it is carried in bundles on the shoulders of the labourer to a threshing floor, and beaten with a flail similar to that used by the English peasantry. The other implements used are a fork, a shovel, a fan for winnowing the grain, and a basket to receive it when winnowed. The threshing-floor is constructed by spreading chunam, or lime, with some oily substance, upon a plot of ground prepared to receive it. It is uniformly constructed on some spot exposed to the winds, and the fanner chooses a day when the breeze is fresh to perform his operations. While at this work, his back is turned

towards the current, and the corn thus exposed is speedily swept out of the fan, when the grains by their own weight descend in a curve to the floor, while the chaff is borne away and scattered over the surrounding country. This exactly corresponds to the practice of all oriental nations, and it will enable the reader to understand somewhat of the force of that figure, wherein the Psalmist, describing the utter destruction of the wicked, says:—

“ The ungodly are not so :
But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.”
PSALM i. 4.

Sometimes a second crop of rice is produced from the same field in China. The common practice, however, is to plant the field with vegetables immediately after the harvest. These vegetables are sweet potatoes, the *pu-tsae*, a species of *raphanus* resembling a turnip in its mode of growth, peas, cabbages, onions, etc. So well do the Chinese manure and pulverize the soil, that a field that waved with yellow corn is in a few days converted into a luxurious kitchen garden. While the vegetables are growing, they sprinkle the ground with some fructifying mixture, which at once enriches and waters the soil. The motive to this is economy; for the heavy rains of the summer wash away all the soluble parts of the earth, leaving a sterile mass of sand and stones.

The Chinese are great economists, and perhaps in no instance is this characteristic more fully displayed than in their preparation of manure. Davis, writing on this subject, says: “ Every substance convertible to manure is diligently

husbanded. The cakes that remain after the expression of their vegetable oils, horns and bones reduced to powder, together with soot and ashes, and the contents of common sewers, are much used. The plaster of old kitchens, which in China have no chimneys, but an opening at the top, is much valued, so that they will sometimes put new plaster on a kitchen for the sake of the old. All sorts of hair are used as manure, and barbers' shavings are carefully appropriated to that purpose. The annual produce must be considerable in a country where some hundred millions of heads are kept constantly shaved. Dung of all animals, but especially night soil, is esteemed above all others; which appears from Columella to have been the case among the Romans. Being sometimes formed into cakes, it is dried in the sun, and in this state becomes an object of sale to farmers, who dilute it previous to use. They construct large cisterns or pits lined with lime-plaster, as well as earthen tubs sunk in the ground, with straw over them to prevent evaporation, in which all kinds of vegetable and animal refuse are collected. These, being diluted with a sufficient quantity of liquid, are left to undergo the putrefactive fermentation, and are then applied to the land. They correct hard water by the addition of quicklime, and are not ignorant of the uses of lime as a manure."

While the laying up of the refuse of a town conduces to the general benefit in the promotion of vegetation, it would seem to be any thing but agreeable. The tank exposed to the influence of the weather, and the spreading肥料 of some parts to dry and waste in the sun, pollute the air

to such an extent, that it becomes offensive to all but the Chinese themselves. It is, however, no needless process; for by it the land, which would otherwise be exhausted by their incomplete mode of tillage, becomes renovated, so as to produce a succession of crops in abundance. The land, indeed, is never allowed to lie fallow, but its fertility is restored and maintained by an indefatigable system of tilth and manuring, unknown in other countries.

In the northern parts of China wheat is cultivated, but it appears to be small-grained and of an indifferent quality. In the neighbourhood of Canton, also, three kinds of millet are grown in small fields laid out in narrow ridges. As before observed, however, rice is the staple food of the Chinese, and to this the husbandman directs his chief attention. The rice grown in China is a much larger grain than that which is common in India. It consists principally of two sorts, the white and red, the former of which is the most esteemed. They have a great prejudice in favour of their native produce, and necessity only will make them purchase that grown in a foreign country; yet the government encourages the importation of foreign rice by exempting the ships which bring it from port charges. This advantage, however, is in a great degree rendered nugatory by the exactions of the lower mandarins, which have frequently caused ships to proceed no farther than Lin-tin, where the rice has been disposed of to coasting junks.

The Chinese display considerable skill in the cultivation of fruit trees. In planting them, practice has taught them the same lesson which

science teaches, that the best situation is the low grounds that form banks of rivers. The alluvial soil of which they are composed, being an intermixture of the richest and most soluble parts of the neighbouring lands with animal and vegetable matter, affords a fund of nourishment for the growth of fruit trees. Hence they are found on the sides of Chinese rivers, which are commonly high embankments of rich mud, thrown up as dikes for the protection of the fields; and the roots are in this manner fed by the water without being swamped. The fine appearance of the fruit cultivation along the Canton river, in oranges, plantains, etc., attests the efficacy of this system of planting fruit trees: their growth and vigour are promoted by the application of liquid manure to their roots, in the same manner as it is applied to the vegetables.

The following is a brief view of the different kinds of cultivation in China, as observed by the English embassy in 1816, while travelling between Peking and Canton. On landing in the gulf of Pechely, the alluvial flats along the river leading to Peking exhibited a dreary waste, with only occasional patches of cultivation, chiefly confined to millet, and small clumps of trees. The banks of the river sometimes exhibited traces of tillage. This aspect continued to the neighbourhood of Tien-tsin, which terminates the grand canal to the north, and between which city and the sea the whole country is almost one continued marsh. After passing Tien-tsin, the face of the country bore a different aspect. Millet, beans, the *sesamum orientale*, the *ricinus communis*, or castor-oil plant, the *pa-tsae*, elm, willow, and ash

were observed growing. On entering Keang-nan, the country considerably improved, and the northern parts of that province were highly fertile, being cultivated chiefly with rice and millet. In the neighbourhood of Nankin, the banks of the river Keang were planted with groves of *thuya orientalis*; rice also grew in alluvial patches, and the cotton shrub was here observed. In proceeding along the river towards Keang-sy and the Poyang lake, the cultivation of rice prevailed. On approaching the side of the lake, the country became hilly and wooded. In the province of Keang-sy the finest scenery commenced. Its valleys were covered with grain, vegetables, and sugar canes, while its hills were adorned with plantations of the single white camellia, whose seeds afford the favourite vegetable oil of the Chinese. In this province other plants and trees of great beauty and utility were observed, as the croton fir and camphor trees, and the varnish shrub. In the neighbourhood of the Méiling pass sugar plantations made up the chief scene in the landscape; and on arriving at the ridge which divides off the Canton province to the south, extensive woods appeared. From the pass itself to within two days' journey of Canton, there was little else than a succession of sterile but picturesque mountains. As far as Chaou-chow-foo, the river was lined with barren limestone cliffs, their intervals being thickly wooded. From Chaou-chow-foo southwards were red sandstone rocks, gradually flattening into an alluvial country, which, as it approached Canton, was cultivated richly with rice and fruit trees. Below Canton the river forms a large delta, the

whole of which has been converted, by means of embankments, into an extensive level for the cultivation of rice.

The provinces of Che-keang, Keang-nan, Hoope, and Sze-chuen, are celebrated for the cultivation of the common mulberry tree, which is grown for the purpose of feeding silk-worms. The principal object in the cultivation of this tree is, to produce the greatest quantity of young and healthy leaves, without fruit. To effect this, the trees are not allowed to exceed a certain age and height. They are planted at a convenient distance from each other, on the plan of a quincunx, and the spaces between them are generally filled with millet, pulse, or other articles of food. They are pruned at the commencement of the year. About four eyes are left on every shoot, and the branches are so arranged as to give plenty of light, and air the leaves. While vegetating, they are carefully watched, and the mischiefs of insects prevented by the application of essential oils, or other mixtures. The young trees suffer by being stripped of their leaves; but the evil is in part counteracted by pruning and lopping the tree, so as to diminish the wood. Fresh plants are procured by cuttings, or layers, and sometimes from seed. When the trees become aged, and show a tendency to bear fruit, they are either uprooted, or so cut as to produce fresh branches.

Besides the mulberry tree, in feeding the worms, the Chinese sometimes have recourse to a wild species of the *morus* tribe, and to another tree, supposed to be a variety of the ash. The houses in which the worms are reared are usually placed in the centre of each plantation of mul-

berry trees, in order that they may be removed as far as possible from any noise ; experience having taught them that it tends to their destruction. Sometimes a whole brood has perished by a thunder storm, and even a loud shout of the human voice, or the bark of a dog, proves frequently destructive to the insect.

The Chinese, in common with the Japanese, also pay great attention to the cultivation of the paper mulberry tree, the skin and the bark of which are converted into paper.

Of all the trees and shrubs indigenous to China, however, the tea plant is the most remarkable and important. To the Chinese peasantry it affords a profitable employment ; to the government it is a source of revenue ; while to numerous and distant nations it affords a refreshing beverage.

The tea plant is an evergreen, somewhat resembling the myrtle in appearance. It grows to a height varying from three to six feet, and is capable of enduring great variations of climate, being cultivated alike in the neighbourhood of Canton, where the heat is intense, and around the walls of Peking, where the winter is sometimes as severe as in the north of Europe. The best kinds are the production of the more temperate climate of Nankin province, which occupies nearly the middle station between the two extremes above mentioned. The greatest portion of that which is brought to the Canton market, and sold to European merchants, is the produce of the hilly province of Fokien, which is situated on the sea-coast, to the north-east of Canton.

The cultivation of the tea plant affords

employment to many of the Chinese peasantry. It is propagated from seed. Holes are drilled in the ground at equal distances and in regular rows, and into each of these holes the planter throws from six to twelve seeds, not above a fifth part of them being expected to grow. While growing, the plants are carefully watered, weeded, and manured, though, when once out of the ground, they would continue to vegetate without care.

The leaf of the tea plant is not fit for gathering until the third year. At that period the shrub is in its prime. When seven years old, the leaves become few and coarse, and the shrub is then generally cut down to the stem, which in the succeeding summer produces an exuberant crop of fresh foliage.

The process of gathering the leaves is one of great nicety and importance. The leaf is plucked separately from the stalk, and in doing this the gatherer is careful that his hands are clean; and in collecting some of the fine sorts he hardly ventures to breathe on the plant. But, with all this care, the labourer is frequently able to collect from four to ten, or even fifteen, pounds in the day. There are four of these gatherings during the season; namely, in February or March, in April or May, in June, and in August.

The fineness and dearness of tea are determined by the tenderness and smallness of the leaf when gathered. From the first gathering, which consists of the young and tender leaves, the green tea called "gunpowder," and the black tea called "pekoe," (which is a corruption of the Canton name *pah-ho*, "white-down,") are manufactured. The second crop of leaves, which are

more fleshy and matured, constitute "souchong" and "hyson;" the third, "imperial" and "congou;" and the fourth, that coarse species of black tea called "bohea." This last crop is united with an inferior tea, grown in a district called Woping, near Canton, together with such as remained unsold in the market of the last season.

The division of land in China being very minute, there are few if any large tea-farmers. The plantations are small, and the business of them chiefly carried on by the owner and his family. After the produce of each picking, the cultivators give the tea a rough preparation, and then carry it to the contractors or tea-collectors, whose business it is to dry the leaves ready for the merchant.

The process of drying differs according to the quality of the tea. Some of the leaves are only exposed under a shed to the sun's rays, and frequently turned. The green teas, however, are generally dried in houses erected for that purpose. These houses contain from five to twenty small furnaces, on the top of which is a flat-bottomed pan made of iron. These pans are heated to a particular temperature, and then a few pounds of fresh-gathered leaves are poured into them. As they touch the pan they crackle, and it is the business of the operator to stir them rapidly about with his hand until they become too hot for the sense of touch. They are then taken off with a fan-like shovel, and poured on some mats before the rollers, who, taking them up in small quantities, roll them in the palms of their hands in one direction, while assistants with fans are employed to fan the

leaves, in order that they may cool the quicker, and retain their curl effectually. This operation of drying and rolling is repeated till all the moisture of the leaves is evaporated, the pans being on each successive occasion less and less heated, lest the flavour should be injured. When the operation is completed, the leaves are separated into their several classes, and stored away either for domestic use or sale. When sold to the Canton tea-merchants, they complete the manufacture by mixing and garbling the different qualities, in which work-women and children are chiefly employed. After this the tea receives a last drying; and being divided according to quality, is finally packed and sealed up in chests for the use of those who love the exhilarating beverage. In China itself all ranks and degrees of people freely partake of it, and its general use in our own country is well known.

Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,
Let fall the curtain, wheel the sofa round;
And while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups
That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each,
So let us welcome peaceful evening in.

COWPER.

Thus we have reason to be thankful to Divine Providence for the blessings obtained from the far distant country of China, and which are brought home by "busy commerce." God graciously causes the plant to grow for our use, and gives the Chinese husbandman skill to cultivate it, and prepare the leaf for our tables.

Another prominent feature in the agriculture of the Chinese, is the growth of the cucumber

THIS vegetable, differing from ours in its wholesome properties, as it does universally in the east, is in great demand in China. It is grown in the south, where the climate is hot, without any artificial warmth, and in the open field. Around this field there is frequently nothing more than a terrace of earth thrown up for a fence, whence the contents are exposed to the depredations of thieves. To protect them, therefore, the owner erects a lodge, with just sufficient room for a watchman to stand in, and in a position where he may overlook the whole field. This lodge, when the crop is growing luxuriously around it, forms no conspicuous object in the scene; but when the vegetables have been removed, it affords a melancholy representation of solitude and desertion. With such a melancholy abandonment Zion was threatened, because its inhabitants heeded not the voice of warning:—

“ And the daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard,
As a lodge in a garden of cucumbers,
As a besieged city.”

ISA. i. 8.

It is impossible to give an idea of the average produce of crops in China. Some of the land is exceedingly fertile, while some is equally sterile. Thus much, however, is certain, that the land is carefully cultivated, and produces great crops. The Chinese keep their fields in better order than their houses, and they plant them with as much care as Europeans do their gardens. But this would not be the case if the lands were not cultivated in small allotments, for the Chinese have neither the skill, energies, nor means of an English farmer. On this subject Barrow remarks:—“ If I might venture to offer an opinion

with respect to the merits of the Chinese as agriculturists, I should not hesitate to say, that let as much ground be given to one of their peasants as he and his family can work with the spade, and he will turn that piece of ground to more advantage, and produce from it more sustenance for the use of man, than any European would be able to do; but let fifty or one hundred acres of the best land in China be given to a farmer at a mean rent, so far from making out of it the value of three rents, on which our farmers usually calculate, he would scarcely be able to support his family, after paying the expense of labour that would be required to work the farm."

As the political father of the nation, the emperor is the sole proprietor of the lands, and the cultivators are his tenants. Large tracts, both of China and Turkestan, are allotted to the soldiery, as was the case among the ancient Egyptians, till the law of territorial property was modified by that consummate statesman, the Hebrew Joseph. The husbandmen of China forfeit their lands if they do not keep them in proper cultivation, or if they refuse to pay the taxes, or invalidate their title by fraudulent practices. At the death of a parent they are divided amongst his sons, the eldest receiving the larger share. Great landholders let land out in small parcels, and pay the taxes themselves, as is frequently the case in England. Every one in China may cultivate waste land, upon application to government; and the people are encouraged to do this by an exemption from taxes until it is

* See the History of the Egyptians, page 33, published by the Religious Tract Society.

rendered productive. From this cause much land has been brought into cultivation; and still, as the population increases, from the industrious habits of the Chinese, it may reasonably be expected that many of the marshes which now form a part of the landscape in China, will one day produce food for their sustenance. Vast as the population of China is, therefore, the land is still capable of feeding many more millions; for Barrow is inclined to think that one-fourth part of the whole country consists of lakes and uncultivated marshes.

There are no parks or pleasure-grounds reserved from the operations of productive industry in China, except those belonging to the emperor, near Peking: nor is there any meadow cultivation; nothing is raised for the food of cattle, but all for man. The few cattle there are in China maintain themselves as they can on uncultivated pastures; but these are very few, for man generally performs the work of horses; and while the consumption of animal food among the higher orders is limited, the lower subsist almost exclusively on the productions of tillage. The horse is a rare object in China; for whatever cannot be transported by water is borne on men's shoulders, and the very boats on the canals are guided in their courses by men. Thus, even the ground which would otherwise have been used for roads is made available for purposes of cultivation.

The Chinese, however, do not depend wholly on the land for sustenance. In no country besides is so much food derived from the water. So important an article of diet is fish, that, at a particular period of the year, men are employed on

the great river Keang to procure the spawn, to deposit wherever fish can subsist. The Chinese have several modes of taking fish, besides the ordinary contrivances of nets and wicker traps used in other countries. On moonlight nights, they use long narrow boats, having wooden flaps at their sides descending to the surface of the water. These flaps, being painted white, reflect a light, and attract the fish to such a degree that they leap upon them, and are then turned over into the boat with a jerk. Another method of taking fish is by birds, which are trained for this purpose. They disperse themselves over lakes and swamps, and return to their owners with their prey. After the fish is caught, it is mostly salted, and thus consumed with rice.

The vast resources of the Chinese, as regards their natural productions, are frequently cut off by drought, inundations, and the locusts. At these seasons they suffer greatly, for the public granaries are poor provisions against dearth. Their original intention is nullified by the malversations and dishonesty of those who conduct them, which has caused the government to prevent their purchasing rice when it is cheap, which leads to its undue consumption. Nor can one province, in which there may be plenty, supply the wants of another; for the Chinese rulers have restricted the intercourse of different parts of the empire to inland navigation; and the inland trade between some provinces on the coast is impeded by lofty mountains, in which unnavigable rivers take their rise. Hence, when famine overtakes the population of a province, coupled with its natural concomitant, disease, in the language of one of the "sacred

edicts," it "makes all places desolate." The evil is sometimes removed by permission from the government to import grain by sea; but before the required relief is afforded, thousands perish.

This circumstance may be looked upon as a positive check to the growth of population. Infanticide, which prevails among the peasantry of China, also does its fearful work. Taught by the state that parents have power over the lives of their children, they frequently destroy their female offspring, in order to escape the trouble of bringing them up. This inhumanity, this dreadful crime, may likewise be superinduced by poverty. The ordinary wages of labour seem to be equivalent to sixpence a day, which gives little more than a bare subsistence. Many, indeed, die from actual starvation, and that in the midst of plenty. Their principal food is rice, and their best beverage tea boiled over and over again, as long as any bitter remains in the leaves.

The poverty of the Chinese peasantry appears to be most conspicuous in the vicinity of the capital, where the soil is barren and sandy; and in the northern provinces, where the climate is ungenial to the process of vegetation. The cold is so intense in the winter, that, what with their scanty fare, and their lack of fuel, clothing, and even shelter, many perish. "In such a condition," says Barrow, "the ties of nature yield to self-preservation; and children are sold, to save both the parent and offspring from perishing by want, and infants become a prey to hopeless injury."

The moral character of the Chinese peasantry

near Pekin is represented by travellers in a very unfavourable light ; they are idle, and, as a natural consequence, dissipated. In the heart of the country, however, they appear to be a comparatively artless race. Of these Dr. Abel thus speaks : — “ They afforded a pleasing contrast, in their simple manners and civil treatment of strangers, to the cunning designs of the salesmen of Jung-chow, and the brutal importunity of the courtiers of Yuen-ming-yuen. When they have accompanied me along the banks of the river, far in advance of my boat, and have beheld me overcome by fatigue and heat, they have always appeared anxious to relieve my distress. One has hastened to the nearest house for a seat, another has brought me water, and a third has held an umbrella over my head to defend me from the sun, whilst their companions have at some distance formed a circle round me. We were to these people as the inhabitants of another world. Our features, dress, and habits were so opposed to theirs, as to induce them to infer that our country, in all its natural characters, must equally differ from their own. ‘ Have you a moon, and sun, and rivers in your country?’ are their occasional questions. Comprehending no other rational objects for the collecting of plants than their useful qualities, and seeing me gather all indiscriminately, they at once supposed that I sought them merely as objects of curiosity, and laughed heartily at my eagerness to obtain them. They pitied my ignorance, and endeavoured to teach me their relative worth, and were anxious for me to learn the important truth, that from one seed many might be obtained. A

young man, having shaken some ripe seeds from the capsules of the *sesamum* and the *sida*, described to me, with much minuteness, that if I took them to my own country, and put them into the ground, they would produce many plants, and I might thus in time obtain the blessing of good rope and oil."

How afflicting is the reflection, that it is the self-same people, of whom this writer is speaking, who are guilty of that foul crime, infanticide! Such are the bitter fruits of pagan philosophy. While the emperor and his subjects complacently deem themselves the only civilized inhabitants of the world, "the dark places" of this idolatrous empire "are full of the habitations of cruelty."



CHAPTER VII.

THE LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE OF THE CHINESE.



CHINESE LITERARY GENTLEMAN.

LANGUAGE.

THE original written characters of the Chinese were purely hieroglyphic, like those of the ancient Egyptians. Experience taught them, however, that the power of simple imitative characters to convey ideas was limited and imperfect; that they were able to express but a small portion of that which occurs to the mind of man; and

from this cause the Chinese language, as it now exists, became gradually unfolded. Proof that the written language originated in picture writing, may be adduced from the similarity existing between some of the ancient and modern forms of their characters.

The Chinese language, still written in characters, is symbolic, and hence imperfect, notwithstanding it presents a greater variety than any other language on earth. A single character placed in various positions is often made to convey ideas which it would be difficult to express by a simple drawing of the object.

Greater ingenuity was required in order to represent invisible substances, such as light and air; or the qualities of things, known among us by the term adjectives, such as those implying strength, weakness, or human action. This is usually accomplished by the union of two or more simple forms, placed together in such a manner that their combination may convey the required idea. Thus, to express brightness, the figures of the sun and moon are combined, and to denote the adjective "aspiring," a man's breath is represented as going out of his body and ascending. The character of a king is described by one —. The idea of a family is expressed by a house, under which three human beings are sheltered.

The Chinese distinguish six modes of writing their characters:—

1. *The Chuen-shoo*.—This is the ancient mode of writing, and is derived immediately from hieroglyphics, and is either a caricature or a stiff and imperfectly written character.

2. *The Le-shoo*.—The Le-shoo style of writing is used by official attendants, and is written with greater freedom than that employed in books.

3. *The Keue-shoo*.—This is termed the pattern style, and it is the mode of neat writing at the present day. It is also employed in printing.

4. *The Hing-shoo*.—This is the regular running hand in which anything which requires despatch is written.

5. *The T'saou-tze*.—This is a hasty and abbreviated form of writing; it is used in common transactions of life, and in correspondence.

6. *The Sung-te*.—The Sung-te is the regular form of the character used in printing. It appears very beautiful in the impression.

The division of characters made according to the ideas they express, is also six-fold:—

1. Figures, or more strictly hieroglyphics, bearing a resemblance to the objects they express.

2. Epithets, or characters, expressive of attributes and relative circumstances.

3. Combination of ideas, in order to express a simple object.

4. Inverted symbols, or characters in which both the form and idea are transposed.

5. Symbols uniting sound, which are of necessity very uncertain as to their signification.

6. Metaphorical symbols, which bear a resemblance to the original meaning, but are nevertheless simply figurative.

Many of these characters are similar in form, but differ widely in meaning; while others have a variety of forms to express a similar idea. The number of the whole is uncertain. Some writers state that there are ten thousand, while others

assert there are as many as eighty thousand. Perhaps the medium would be nearest the truth; but the fact is, there is no dictionary, either native or foreign, in which they are all contained.

From the great number of characters used, as well as their varied significations, it has been supposed that the Chinese language is difficult of acquisition. On this subject, Davis remarks:—“The roots, or original characters of the Chinese, or what, by a species of analogy, may be called its *alphabet*, are only 214 in number, and might be reduced to a much smaller amount by a little dissection and analysis. To assert that there are so many thousand characters in the language, is very much the same thing as to say that there are so many thousand words in Johnson’s dictionary. Nor is a knowledge of the *whole* more necessary for every practical purpose, than it is to get all Johnson’s dictionary by heart, in order to read and converse in English.”

The written characters of the Chinese language are the same over an extent of 2000 miles of latitude—from Japan in the north, to Cochin China in the south. This uniformity in the written character, however, has not prevented the existence of diversities in the oral languages of the different provinces. While the natives of the two extremities of the empire, indeed, can read the same books, and can understand each other perfectly on paper, they can scarcely hold intelligible converse with each other. For example: while a native of Pekin pronounces the numerals expressive of the number 22, *urh-she-urh*, a native of Canton calls them *ee-shap-ee*, although both write them alike.

The total number of different syllables in the Chinese language does not greatly exceed four hundred, but these are trebled and even quadrupled by various intonations, which are sufficiently distinct to the ear of a native. This obviates the confusion which would arise from the circumstance, that many words have a great variety of significations; as *che*, which means to know, wisdom, folly, to arrive, effect, govern, pierce, impede, stop, foundation, toes, of, a branch, elegant, grass, present, etc. But sometimes the danger of misunderstanding in speech is obviated by joining two words together to express any particular object. Thus *foo* means both "father" and "axe;" and the possibility of being misunderstood is prevented by saying *foo-tsin*, "father-relation," and *foo-ton*, "axe-head." The written language, therefore, is more brief and concise than the oral language, inasmuch as it has no need of such expletives. The character clearly expresses its signification, by the position in which its root is placed.

The grammar of the Chinese language is very limited. There is no inflexion in it whatever, whence the relation to each other of words in a sentence can only be marked by their position. Thus the verb must always precede its object, and follow its agent. The plural is formed by a multitude of particles affixed to nouns; as, for instance, *jin-mun* signifies, "men," while *jin* alone means "man." Sometimes the plural number is denoted by repeating the noun, as *jin-jin*, "men;" but this is rendered unnecessary when a specific number is prefixed, as *san-jin*, "three men." The genitive or possessive case is usually

denoted by the affix *che*, succeeding the noun, as *T'ien che gen*, "Heaven's favour." In the comparison of adjectives, the Chinese call in the aid of mountains, forests, etc., to denote the gradation. Thus, for "I am exceedingly angry," they say, "My anger is as high as a mountain, and as deep as the sea." But the best idea of the Chinese grammar may be found in their division of words. These are separated into three classes: first, "live words," or verbs denoting action or passion; secondly, "dead words," or nouns substantive and adjective; thirdly, "auxiliaries of speech," or particles that assist expression.

From this it may be inferred that the construction of words in sentences differs materially from our own. Their composition is, indeed, extremely simple, as it was in many of the ancient languages. At the same time it exhibits a certain degree of ambiguity.

This simplicity and ambiguity are more observable in the oral than the written language of the Chinese; nevertheless, their sentences being usually laconic, a little attention enables a student to analyze them, whether spoken or written.

The style of the Chinese is neither so florid nor hyperbolical as that of the southern nations of Asia. The climax is a figure in great use, and Chinese writers are extremely fond of metaphors. When they discover a figure that pleases them, they dwell upon it with rapture, and repeat it so frequently that the repetition mars their pages. Parables, allegory, personification, and apostrophe, are rarely met with in Chinese authors; but interrogation, exclamation, hyperboles, and bombastic expressions, abound in their writings. Puns and

other plays upon words are used by the best writers, and they excel in amplification. In their descriptions, also, they excel; the only fault of which is, their being destitute of variety. In these they do not outstep the bounds prescribed by custom.

There are three kinds of style distinguished by Chinese authors: first, when the attention of the writer is engrossed with his subject, without any regard to expressions; secondly, when he is studious only of elegant expressions; and, thirdly, when he combines correctness of ideas with classical diction. Although they have no grammar of their language, they have numerous essays upon style and composition, and a large collection of treatises, which contain patterns of elegant writings. In order to become a classical writer, they recommend the following rules: connexion; variety in the construction of periods, and in the details of the subject; purity of diction; smooth sentences; and lively description and contrast. Whoever studies these points, they say, will be able to write elegantly, and to embody the beauties of the ancients, whom they take for their models in composition.

In a treatise on study, the following rules for a student occur, which exhibit much practical wisdom:—"The first thing needful is to form a resolution, for the object on which a determined resolution rests must succeed. Studies ought to commence during the fifth watch, for these early hours are many times more advantageous than the subsequent forenoon, and later portions of the day. The attention should be as intensely exerted as that of a general at the head of his army,

or a criminal judge in a court. On no account should there be breaks of five and ten days in one's studies. Do not fear being slow, only fear standing still; fear one day's scorching heat, followed by ten of cold. In prosecuting a journey on the road, he who walks fast and stops frequently, does not get on so well as he who walks constantly and at a slower pace. Study, however, though it should not be intermitted or delayed, ought not to be followed with too great eagerness and precipitancy; for admitting that a man can, if he try, walk a hundred *ly* a day, yet if he walk only seventy or eighty, he will feel himself strong, and equal to this exertion daily; whereas by working himself up to overstrained effort he will make himself ill, and thus more time will be lost than learning gained."

LITERATURE.

On the subject of Chinese literature, Sir George Staunton remarks:—"One of the most remarkable national peculiarities of the Chinese, is their extraordinary addiction to letters, and the general prevalence of literary habits among the middling and higher orders, and the very honourable pre-eminence which from the most remote period has been universally conceded to that class which is exclusively devoted to literary pursuits. Since the memorable era of Confucius, the Chinese empire has been repeatedly dismembered, and again restored to its integrity; its sceptre has passed through the hands of many families or dynasties; it has been a prey to many intestine divisions and revolutions, and it has been twice subdued by a foreign foe; but the reverence of

the government and people for the name and institutions of Confucius has survived every change."

Under the influence of such institutions, it is by no means surprising that the proportion of the community exclusively devoted to letters should be much greater in China than it is in any other country on the surface of the globe. It is so great as to constitute of itself a distinct class in the state. It is the first and most honourable of the four classes into which the body of the people is considered as divisible, according to the Chinese political system; namely, the literary, the agricultural, the manufacturing, and the mercantile.

The literature of the Chinese consists of their sacred or canonical works; moral and didactic books; history; biography; works on their criminal law; works on astronomy, geography, medicine, etc.; poetry, dramatic writings, and works of fiction. All these are briefly noticed underneath, that the reader may be enabled to form a just notion of the state of literature in China.

Sacred, or canonical works.—These works have been briefly reviewed in a previous chapter.* They are the productions of Confucius and his school, and may be termed philosophical writings. Their whole aim is to teach the Chinese emperors how to rule, and the nation to obey. For this purpose, they represent that all must be virtuous, since on no other principle can order be obtained. This was both just and wise; but it was one thing to tell a people that they must be virtuous, and another to instruct them how to practise virtue.

* See p. 81.

The "sacred or canonical works" fail in this essential knowledge, and hence they must be termed simply theoretical. Confucius himself discovered the inefficacy of his philosophy. He taught the principles of good government, and maintained that if his principles were generally received, all the world would become virtuous, war would cease, and the empire enjoy prosperity and peace; but although he frequently obtained office, for the sole purpose of proving by his own administration that his theory could be reduced to practice, he always failed. Slander assailed him; vice triumphed over virtue; and, at length, disgusted with politics, he retired into private life. The philosopher himself could not, in truth, sustain an even tenor of moral rectitude; for it is recorded, that he unjustly discarded his lawful wife. So fallible is human wisdom, and so powerless is it to affect the seat of all human action—the heart. The canonical works may teach some great truths to both the ruler of China and his people, and may even have, to some extent, influenced their conduct; but the heart still retains its original and native corruption, and it can only be cleansed by the influences of the Holy Spirit.

Moral and didactic books.—These works rank next to the "sacred or canonical works." They are moral and political essays, which have the sanction both of the government and the learned. Dr. Milne thus speaks of the *Shing-yu*, or "Sacred Edict," which ranks high in this list of books:—
"It treats of moral duties and of political economy. Like all similar Chinese productions, it begins with filial piety, and thence branches out

into various other relative duties, according to their supposed importance. Indeed, on whatever subject a Chinese writer treats, he can at all times, with the utmost facility, draw arguments for its support from the relation between parent and child. Even the grossest absurdities of their idolatry are thus supported. The work we are now considering is, in general, for the matter of it, well worth a perusal. Though Christians can derive no improvement to their ethics from it, yet it will confirm them more and more in the belief of two important points, namely, that God has not left himself without a witness in the minds of the heathen ; and that the bare light of nature, as it is called, even when aided by all the light of pagan philosophy, is totally incapable of leading men to the knowledge and worship of the true God. Yet, for my own part, as an individual, I am of opinion that, as all truth and all good came originally from the same source, so we ought to look with a degree of reverence on those fragments of just sentiment and good principle which we sometimes meet with among the heathen."

The following aphorisms, derived from the moral and didactic works, are offered as examples of the "just sentiment and good principle," which sometimes emanate from the minds of Chinese authors.

The error of a moment becomes the sorrow of a whole life.

The gem cannot be polished without friction, nor man perfected without trials.

Between two parties, do not speak swords here and flatteries there.

Carelessness gives temptation to dishonesty.

The man who combats himself, will be happier than he who contends with others

A man need only correct himself with the same rigour that he reprehends others; and excuse others with the same indulgence that he shows to himself.

Envy not those who have, nor despise those who have not.

Do not despise the good things of Providence.

Domestic failings should not be published.

Let every man sweep the snow from before his own door, and not busy himself about the frost on his neighbour's tiles.

The more talents are exercised, the more they will be developed.

The torment of envy is like a grain of sand in the eye.

Complain not of Heaven, and blame not men.

Do not deceive and oppress the orphan and widow.

Be not proud of wealth, nor complain of poverty.

He who does not soar high, will suffer less by a fall.

Do not wrongfully accuse any one.

Though the life of man falls short of a hundred years, he gives himself as much pain and anxiety as if he were to live a thousand.

Such aphorisms as these adorn both the temples and dwellings of the Chinese. A recent writer has adduced others, which bear a resemblance to some passages of Scripture, as the following :—

Virtue is the surest road to longevity; but vice meets with an early doom.

The heart is the fountain of life.

Honours come by diligence; riches spring from economy.

If you love your son, give him plenty of the cudgel; if you hate your son, cram him with dainties.

A virtuous woman is a source of honour to her husband; a vicious one causes him disgrace.

Every blade of grass has its share of the dews of heaven; and though the birds of the forest have no gainers, the wide world is before them.

That which touches vermilion is reddened.

The fear of the Lord lengtheneth days; but the years of the wicked shall be shortened, Prov. x. 27.

Out of it [the heart] are the issues of life, Prov. iv. 23.

The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute, Prov. xii. 24.

He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes, Prov. xiii. 24.

A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones, Prov. xii. 4.

Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them, Matt. vi. 26.

Evil communications corrupt good manners, 1 Cor. xv. 33.

Similarity of sentiment may certainly be traced in these passages, but the vast superiority of the sacred writers is apparent. Compared with their breathings, indeed, those adduced from Chinese authors sink into insignificance. This is more especially observable in the passage set in juxtaposition with that uttered by our Saviour. The writer of it, knew only that the birds of the air are fed without treasuring up their stores in garners: Christ taught his disciples, and the world at large, that they are fed by the bounty of a common Father.

History.—History may be said to occupy the next place to the moral and didactic works in Chinese literature. The master-works are the *Shoo-king*, and the historical annals of Confucius, called *Chun-tsew*. On these works all succeeding works are founded, as far as their data extend; but there are other minor histories which treat of later ages. The histories of the Chinese, however, are not such works as the Roman, Greek, and European historians have produced. The very best among them are by no means superior to the fragments of the annals of Egypt and Chaldaea. The earlier annals are little better than fiction, and those of a later date are replete with fulsome adulation. As Gutzlaff observes, "Instead of allowing that common mortals had any part in the affairs of the world, they speak only of the emperors who then reigned. They represent them as the sources from which the whole order of things emanated, and all others as mere puppets, who moved at the pleasure of the autocrat. This is truly Chinese. The whole nation is represented by the emperor, and absorbed in him."

An example of the style which Chinese historians have adopted, is subjoined:—"In the sixth year of Hung-woo, the founder of the Ming dynasty, the emperor summoned the mandarins of the various districts before him, and thus addressed them:—"Kindness and cheerfulness are the virtues which man ought to possess: hard-heartedness and cruelty will rob him of every good quality. If you only pretend to be kind, you will not possess any real goodness of heart; and if you only wish to appear cheerful, you will not exhibit true affability. Strive, therefore, to practise true virtue."

"The emperor chose the Taou priests to perform the service at the national altars, and to officiate at festivals of the gods of the land, river, and cows.

"Hoo-wei-yung, a deputy magistrate, was degraded on account of not having brought the multifarious affairs of his province to a conclusion.

"On the first day of the third month was a solar eclipse. About the same time, several military officers and civilians received promotion."

This is the classical method of writing history among the Chinese, and in such a strain their pages read from first to last. Statements that in such and such a month, in such and such a year of the reign of a certain prince, the minister or general went to the capital, or traversed the country; and the prince repaired to his palace, offered sacrifices, or issued orders, etc., make up their sum. They are mere dry chronological details, wherein no spring of human action is traced, and no reference is made to the great Disposer of human events.

The portion of Chinese history most interesting

to a foreigner is, when the country was involved in contests with the Tartars, or subjected by their invasions.

The manner in which Chinese historians notice foreign countries is at once simple and amusing. A specimen is subjoined :—“European navigators calculate their distances by degrees, as the Chinese do by watches. The Europeans coming to China sail first eighty degrees in a southerly course, until they reach the Cape of Storms; and thence steer in a northerly direction, until they arrive at the limits of the province of Quang-tong. This is a voyage of six months, or more, during which they see no land.

“There is also a mode of communicating from Europe with China by land; but as the kingdom of Russia intervenes, and is difficult of access, the route by sea is always preferred.

“Russia is about 12,000 ly* distant from Peking. It is bounded on the other sides by Europe and Turkey. The climate to the north is so very cold, that although it is understood that those parts were formerly inhabited, travellers meet with no traces of natives at present, and they are supposed to have perished. The woods are very extensive, and the snow lies many fathoms deep. They have old accounts of mountains of ice in the northern seas, some thousand cubits high, which, though they have been disbelieved, may yet be entitled to credit.”

The lack of veracity, which is a dark spot in the character of the Chinese, is every where discovered in their historical writings. That order

and connexion may be preserved in them, they will even supply data where it is impossible for them to be ascertained. Like the mendacious Livy, and other ancient historians, they also put orations into the mouths of their heroes, which they neither uttered nor conceived. Some writers have clothed their whole narrative in this garb, as though they wished to write a dialogue; at the same time so deep is their ingenuity, that even their mythological stories have an appearance of probability, if not of veracity. These remarks apply more especially to details having reference to their own country. When they speak of "barbarians," as they know but little about them, and their self-love is strong, their statements are not only imperfect, but marred with gross falsehood.

Biography.—The Chinese call biography *Sing-heo*, or "the study of names." In this department of literature they have a great variety of books, at the head of which, in date and estimation, stands the *Lun-yu*, or discourses of Confucius, before noticed. Some of their memoirs are exceedingly interesting, and throw more light on history than the works of professed historians. There is a modern biographical work called *Sing-poo*, which consists of one hundred volumes, and comprises the lives of eminent men and women, as do our biographical dictionaries.

Works on the criminal law.—Some account of the great work on criminal law among the Chinese has been already given in a previous chapter. The civil code of the present Tartar dynasty consists of two hundred and sixty-one volumes, which contain not only the existing laws, but an account of all the changes and modifications

of the law since A.D. 1644. The body of the work is divided into nine parts. The first of these parts contains all matters concerning the imperial house now reigning ; the second relates to the palace and its regulations ; the next six are concerning the six tribunals before described ; and under the ninth, and last, are miscellaneous laws, relating to public education, etc. In the part which relates to the board of civil offices, there is a detailed list of all the appointments in the empire, the relative rank of each officer, and the rules for selecting, appointing, removing, rewarding, and punishing them.

Works on astronomy, geography, medicine, etc.—The Chinese possess one work, published in one hundred volumes, which treats of spherical trigonometry, geometry, astronomy, and music. Of medicine, also, they possess some works, as the *Chang-Seng*, or “long life,” an essay on diet and regimen ; and the famous *Pun-tsaou*, or “herbal.” In geography, their literature is rich ; and they have maps, in which every province is laid down on the spherical projection, with lines of latitude, and meridians of longitude. All these works, however, are of very little practical utility. Notwithstanding their boasted civilization, the science of the Chinese is not many degrees superior to that of the primitive ages.

Poetry.—In what rude strains the ancient poets among the Chinese sang has been mentioned in a review of the “book of Songs,” included in the sacred classics. Since that age, the structure of their verse has undergone considerable improvement ; and there have been eras of their history, when the art of poetry in all its various branches

—the lyric, epic, descriptive, pastoral, moral, didactic, epigrammatic, and sentimental, has been especially cultivated. The Chinese, themselves, compare its progress to the growth of a tree. “The ancient book of songs,” they say, “may be likened to the roots; when Soolo flourished, the buds appeared; in the time of Kiên-gan there was abundance of foliage; but, during the Tang dynasty, many reposed under the shade of the tree, and it yielded rich supplies of flowers and fruits.”

It would require more space than our limits will allow to give specimens of every kind of Chinese poetry. Hence one example only is subjoined; which will give the reader an idea of their descriptive verse.

The style of descriptive poetry among the Chinese may be illustrated by a poem concerning the English, which was written in 1813, by one better instructed than most of his countrymen who have ventured to travel abroad. It is entitled “London,” and was originally published in the *Royal Asiatic Transactions*, where it was printed with the Chinese text, and where the translator observed that the poem being a simple description, contains few flights of fancy; whence it was judged best to afford a literal prose translation, retaining all the hyperboles of the original.

Afar in the ocean, towards the extremities of the north-west,
There is a nation, or country, called England.

The climate is frigid, and you are compelled to approach the
fire.

The houses are so lofty, that you may pluck the stars!

The pious inhabitants respect the ceremonies of worship,
And the virtuous among them ever read the sacred books

They bear a peculiar enmity towards the French nation,
The weapons of war rest not for a moment between them.

Their fertile hills, adorned with the richest luxuriance,
Resemble in the outline of their summits, the arched eyebrows of a
fair woman.

The inhabitants are inspired with a respect for the female sex,
Who in this land correspond with the perfect features of nature;
Their young maidens have cheeks resembling red blossoms,
And the complexion of their beauties is like the white gem :
Of old has connubial affection been highly esteemed among them,
Husband and wife delighting in mutual harmony.

Here some stanzas are omitted, after which the
poet proceeds to describe the features of our great
metropolis.

The two banks of the river lie to the north and south ;
Three bridges* interrupt the stream, and form a communication :
Vessels of every kind pass between the arches,
While men and horses pace among the clouds [fogs]:
A thousand masses of stone rise one above the other,
And the river flows through nine channels :
The bridge of Loyfing, which out-tops all in our empire,
Is in shape and size somewhat like these.

The towering edifices rise story above story,
In all the stateliness of splendid mansions :
Railings of iron thickly stud the sides of every entrance,
And streams from the river circulate through the walls.
The sides of each apartment are variegated with devices ;
Through the windows of glass appear the scarlet hangings :
And in the street itself is presented a beautiful scene ;
The congregated buildings have all the aspect of a picture.

The spacious streets are exceedingly smooth and level,
Each being crossed by others at intervals :
On either side perambulate men and women ;
In the centre career along the carriages and horses :
The mingled sound of voices is heard in the shops at evening ;
During winter the heaped-up snows adhere to the pathway :
Lamps are displayed at night along the street-sides,
Whose radiance twinkles like the stars of the sky.

London, Blackfriars, and Westminster, the only bridges then
existing.

Chinese poetry presents almost every kind of stanza and mode of arrangement known among ourselves. Thus, in one of their most popular poems, the *Hwa-tseen*, or "the flower and the leaf," there are stanzas, consisting of four or eight lines, with seven characters, and, consequently, seven syllables in each line, with every alternate line rhyming; and there are some in which every alternate syllable rhymes; and others in which the rhyme occurs at the end and in the middle of the line. Notwithstanding, the Chinese do not seem to possess a nice ear for the perception of true rhymes, which may partly arise from their not having such precise symbols or marks of sound as our alphabetic letters. In one particular, that of parallelism, Chinese poetry resembles the Hebrew; and the peculiar structure of the language renders the parallelism much more exact, as word for word is usually set in juxtaposition.

On the difficulties attending the translation of Chinese poetry, Gutzlaff remarks:—"That it is interwoven with so many strange and original metaphors and figures of speech, and contains such various allusions to history and deified heroes, that at first sight it appears a mere jargon. But when a sufficient acquaintance with these peculiarities has enabled the reader to penetrate into the spirit, a splendid vista opens, and the most sublime images present themselves before him. This, however, applies to the works of master poets only: the productions of numberless imitators are insipid, and full of affectation. Nature presents scenes as grand and sublime in China as in any other part of the world. The most romantic spots are the abodes of poets until the

present day. Much, therefore, that we admire in descriptive writers of other nations who have copied from nature, may be discovered in the effusions of Chinese bards, in a different garb."

Dramatic writings.—The Chinese possess a collection of plays in about two hundred volumes, from which one hundred pieces have been selected for general use, as the flower of the whole. These plays chiefly relate to facts in history and domestic manners. Since the Tartar conquest, they have much degenerated in their character.

Works of fiction.—There is a numerous class of works of fiction in the Chinese language, all of which are either written in the conversational style, or in detached verses. Among them, some have become very popular, and a few are ranked under the title of *Tsae-tsze*, or "works of genius," Their character is two-fold. While some have a peculiar value, inasmuch as they paint Chinese society as it really exists; others are composed of the most improbable and extravagant stories. Some, indeed, cannot be read without horrifying the mind of the reader, whence the government prohibits their publication. But their contents are so agreeable to the depraved appetite of man, that this prohibition is defied. They are still sold, and their possessors read them with the greatest avidity.

It will be seen by the foregoing, that the Chinese, although they possess a bulky literature, have very little that is really practical and useful. Their sacred works are mere political essays on the art of government, and contain much that is fallacious; their moral and didactic works are incapable of giving a right impulse to

human action; their histories are mere skeletons, conveying no really useful knowledge beyond the data of events; their works on the criminal code do nothing more than teach by the bastinado; their volumes on the sciences are miserably deficient in true information; while their belles lettres are, to a considerable extent, calculated to work mischief among the deluded and semi-barbarous multitude.

The mass of thought contained in their volumes, indeed, presents a hideous picture of the human intellect. And on these productions the minds of the millions of China are compelled to feed. They are their guides through life, and their stay in the hour of death. This is a fearful consideration, when it is remembered that the Chinese form a third part of the whole human race; and it should arouse the slumbering zeal of Christians on their behalf. That great and ancient nation requires renovating; for the whole head of it is sick, and the whole heart faint with its iniquities. And how can this be effected, but by spreading the knowledge of the truth, as it is in Jesus, throughout the length and breadth of the whole land? The words of our blessed Lord are encouraging to all his disciples: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me," John xii. 32.

He has been lifted up on the cross a sacrifice for the sin of the world; nor will the Chinese possess true knowledge till they know him, whom to know is life eternal.

Past experience teaches that the efforts of pagan philosophers are utterly vain. Confucius and his disciples wrought to that end, both by

their personal efforts and their writings, but human nature laughed them to scorn. It showed itself, despite all their labours, corrupted still. And thus will it show itself, even unto the end of the world, unless the glorious gospel is made known unto them. That alone can renovate China, so long paralyzed by superstition, custom, and despotism. When that is published among the Chinese, they will burst the fetters with which they have long been bound. A new era will then dawn upon them in the world of letters and science; for whilst the gospel is all-sufficient to eradicate error, and to renovate the hearts of a people, it conduces to render human society happy, by giving an impulse and a right direction to the intellect. It has thus worked for good in our own beloved country; and having experienced its saving and benign influence, duty bids us publish it to all the nations around, that they may likewise thus be blessed.



CHAPTER VIII.

THE MANUFACTURES, ARTS, AND SCIENCES OF THE CHINESE.



ITINERANT SHOEMAKER.

MANUFACTURES.

It appears that the art of printing, the composition of gunpowder, and the magnetic compass, had each their origin in China, and were imported into Europe through the channels of oriental commerce by the way of Asia Minor, or the Red Sea. Europeans, however, have far outstripped the Chinese in their use and application.

The art of printing was practised in China during the tenth century of our era. History

relates that the first essay in the art was to transfer the pages from stone blocks, on which the writing had been engraved. By this process the ground of the paper was black, and the letters white. This, however, in the course of time gave way to wooden blocks, on which the characters were cut in relief, and the effect thereby reversed. The paper remained white, and the characters were impressed in ink. This is the Chinese mode of printing at the present day, and perhaps it is better suited to the Chinese characters than that in use among ourselves. It would, indeed, be difficult for a printer to pick out the various characters required for the printing of a single book, as our compositors do the twenty-six letters of our alphabet from the little cells in which they are arranged before them. Besides, the plan of printing from blocks is much better for the Chinese, inasmuch as copies of their "sacred works" are required in great numbers for the use of the whole population.

The material used for printing in China is pear-tree wood. A block of this wood is finely planed and squared to the shape and dimensions of two pages. After this the surface is rubbed over with a paste, sometimes made from boiled rice, which renders it smooth. While yet wet, the future pages, firmly transcribed on their transparent paper, are laid upon it in an inverted position, and this paper being subsequently rubbed off, a clear impression in ink of the inverted writing remains on the wood. The workman then, with a sharp graver, cuts away that portion of the wooden surface not covered by ink, and leaves the characters in relief. Any error may be

corrected by inserting small pieces of wood ; but the process is so cheap and expeditious, that it is easy to replane and re-engrave the block.

The paper used by the Chinese in their volumes is almost as thin and absorbent of ink as that we call 'silver paper.' The impression is given with a soft contact, and, being so thin and transparent, on one side only. This is done with such expedition, that one man can strike off two thousand copies in a day. The paper used in printing is composed of the *liber*, or inner bark of a species of *morus*, cotton, and bamboo. The latter is chiefly used, and the manufacture of it has been thus described :—"The stalks are cut near the ground, and then sorted into parcels according to the age, and tied up in small bundles. The younger the bamboo, the better is the quality of the paper made from it. The bundles are thrown into a reservoir of mud and water, and buried in the ooze for about a fortnight to soften them. They are then taken out, cut into pieces of a proper length, and put into mortars with a little water, to be pounded to a pulp with large wooden pestles. This semi-fluid mass, after being cleansed of the coarsest parts, is transferred to a great tub of water, and additions of the substance are made, until the whole becomes of sufficient consistence to form paper. Then a workman takes up a sheet with a mould or frame of the proper dimensions, which is constructed of bamboo in small strips, made smooth and round like wire. The pulp is continually agitated by other hands, while one is taking up the sheets, which are then laid upon smooth tables to dry. According to others, the paper is dried by placing the newly-made sheets

upon a heated wall, and rubbing them with brushes until dry. This paper is unfit for writing on with liquid ink, and is of a yellowish colour. The Chinese size it by dipping the sheets into a solution of fish-glue and alun, either during or after the first process of making it. The sheets are usually three feet and a half in length, and two in breadth. The fine paper used for letters is polished, after sizing, by rubbing it with smooth stones."

The ink used by the Chinese is that known under the name of Indian ink. The ingredients of which it is prepared, as well as their qualities, greatly vary. Lamp-black, however, and some glutinous substances, always form its component parts. A little musk is sometimes added to give it an agreeable odour. It is occasionally manufactured in a great variety of forms and sizes, and stamped with ornamental devices, either plain or in gold and silver colours. The best ink is produced at Hoey-chow-foo, and it not only serves for the common purposes of printing and writing, but frequently for drawings and designs. Of the superior sorts, a number of ornamented cakes are commonly disposed in small cases richly japanned and gilt.

The invention of gunpowder, as composed of sulphur, saltpetre, and willow charcoal, is carried very far back by the Chinese. Probably it was applied by them to fire-works—in which they excel at the present day—at a very early date; but its particular application to fire-arms seems to have been derived from the west, for it is certain that they were ignorant of their use till about A.D. 1300. Soon after this they appear to

have had a species of gunnery, which were tubes of wrought-iron, bound together by hoops; and when the Jesuits located themselves in China, they taught the Chinese to cast cannon. The celebrated Kang-he, after the conquest of China, employed father Verbiest to superintend the casting of some hundred guns, which union of military with clerical pursuits brought some scandal upon him at Rome. Neither the guns nor the powder of the Chinese, however, seem to be very effective, or at least to equal those manufactured and in use by Europeans. It is recorded as a wonder, that one of their cannon pierced the *Imogene* frigate with a shot when it was within pistol-shot of the battery.

One of the manufactures in which the Chinese most excel is silks. Their brilliant colours, and exquisite texture, have constituted them the most splendid article of dress in China. All, from the noble to the peasant, are ambitious of wearing them, and they are used not only in robes and trowsers, but in boots, shoes, and caps. The silks most worn by the Chinese are plain, but they are manufactured in every colour, and with beautiful figures. So highly do the Chinese esteem the manufacture of silks, that the empress is its patroness, and goes annually, with her maids of honour, to worship the god of silk, whilst she encourages the rearing of the worm, and the weaving of the article amongst her women. The manufacture, beautiful as it is, is merely the work of human hands, woven in simple looms, like that produced among the ancients.

The velvet of the Chinese is inferior to the European; but their damask, sarcenet, satin, crape,

and shawls, are reckoned superior. The Chinese, also, display considerable skill in the manufacture of cotton goods, and in a variety of stuffs made of silk and cotton, which are very costly. Carpets are manufactured in the northern provinces, which are of the most elegant description; and in the same parts they imitate our woollens, though with little success.

The Chinese are celebrated for the manufacture of artificial flowers, and the mats and various other articles made of bamboo are remarkable for their neatness. Ivory is wrought with great elegance, and their manufacture of cut glass nearly equals that of England. In porcelain and lacquered ware they excel, though in the former they are now outstripped by foreigners, and the latter, for lustre and beauty, by the Japanese.

Of the more common manufactures, or trades, Gutzlaff thus writes:—"For the working of iron and steel, the Chinese have never been celebrated; their instruments and utensils are very clumsy, their steel badly tempered, and their knives and razors indifferently polished. The finer toys and trinkets made of that substance, which eclipses the lustre of every other metal, are unknown in this country.

"It would be difficult to find a blacksmith in China able to make a large anchor, or a huge piece of machinery. Their needles, locks, etc., are all of a similar description: they are not able to make good springs, or to temper the steel properly. Whatever they want in skill, however, they supply in economy and perseverance. Their bellows and instruments, adapted for saving every particle, prove them to be a nation duly

attentive to the minor points, and parsimonious with the very filings. They understand casting iron. Many of their kitchen utensils, which we make of copper, are here made of this metal. Their iron cannon-foundries are very numerous, and even the barrel of a matchlock is cast.

“The Chinese work in tin with great neatness, of which they cast and beat a great variety of utensils. It often serves as a substitute for copper, the latter being more expensive. Chinese braziers, and coppersmiths, are not frequently met with, because the government prohibits the use of copper and brass, except for the casting of coin. Their work is therefore confined to a few unimportant things, which they make with great neatness. They are not able to manufacture tin-plates, and these are imported principally for the fabrication of lacquered ware. The work of gold and silversmiths, and jewellers, is exquisite, and can vie with that of any other nation.

“Chinese artisans are in the habit of itinerating with their implements, and performing work as it may casually fall in their way. The cook may be seen in the market with all culinary utensils for the preparation of viands; whilst the fruiterer, fishmonger, and butcher, are near at hand to supply the materials. Even a smithy is carried about, and used at any convenient place in the open air where most customers may be expected. The streets swarm with tinkers of every description, and their occupations extend to the repairing of every article. The dexterity with which they put together broken glass, porcelain, and other fragile articles, is astonishing. Their earnings are so trifling, that the most industrious

workman does not gain above one mace (about ninepence) per day.

“Barbers put their wash-stand on one end of a bamboo-pole, and their case of drawers, fitted up as a seat for their customers, and containing all the tonsorial apparatus, on the other end. They perform their functions in the open street, or in the market-place, without feeling the least sense of impropriety.



ITNERANT BARBER.

“Shoemakers and tailors are much better off than workers in metal. They receive higher wages, and are more esteemed. Joiners and carpenters have the name of skilful artisans. The former are able to imitate exactly our European.

furniture, and the latter are famous for boat-building, though very deficient in the construction of houses. Some few individuals at Canton, and in other large cities, can make clocks and watches; but they are unable to manufacture the steel work.* We have also seen a rudely-made musket, of which, however, the lock was foreign. All articles, the making of which requires more than mere mechanical skill, and the application of profound thought and mathematical exactness, is beyond Chinese ingenuity. Whenever they have a good pattern, the natives of Canton will endeavour to imitate it; but they attempt nothing further. Addicted from their youth to follow ancient rule, they do not, even in their daily occupations, think for themselves, but prefer accommodating themselves to others."

The Chinese are strangers to machinery, but their ingenuity is conspicuous in the ready and simple modes in which they contrive to abridge labour. An example of this is furnished by Dr. Abel; he says:—"Chance led me to the shop of a blacksmith, the manufacturer of various iron instruments, from a sword to a hoe. This man well understood the modifying properties of heat, and took the fullest advantage of them in all the practical concerns of his business. He was forming a reaping-hook at the time of my visit. A large pair of shears, having one blade fixed in a heavy block of wood, and the other furnished with a long handle, to serve as a lever, stood beside him. Bringing a piece of metal of the necessary dimensions from the forge at a white heat, he placed it between the blades of this instrument, and cut it into shape with equal ease and despatch."

The fashion of most of the Chinese tools is very peculiar. The saw of the carpenter, for instance, is formed of a thin plate of steel, which is kept straight by a light frame of bamboo at the back, which serves at the same time for a handle. Then, again, carpenters work their awls with a thong, the two extremities of which are attached to the two ends of a stick. The thong being quite slack, is turned round the handle of the awl once, and the instrument is then worked backwards and forwards with great velocity.

Concerning some of the industrious arts of the Chinese, it is questioned whether they are original, or borrowed from India. Thus, in cleaning cotton, they make use of a double process, in most respects similar to that known in India. In order to free the cotton from its seed, two wooden cylinders are placed horizontally one above the other, and very nearly in contact. These are put in motion by a wheel and treadle, and the cotton being applied to one side of the crevice is turned over by the cylinders to the other, while the seeds which are too large to enter between them fall to the ground. This done, the cotton is freed from knots and dirt by a second process. An elastic bow, with a tight string, is held by the carder over a heap of the wool. The string of this bow is pulled down with some force under a portion of the cotton, by means of a wooden instrument in his right hand, while at the same time he suddenly allows the bow to recoil. The vibration thus continually kept up, scatters and loosens the cotton, and separates it into fine white flocks, without injuring the fibre.

In most cases, however, no doubt can exist as to the originality of inventions among the Chi-

nese. Their mode of making candles from the seed of the *croton sebiferum*, and of extracting oil from the berry of the *camellia oleifera*, is peculiar. So also is their manufacture of metals, of which the mirror may form an example. The speculum of their mirrors is apparently formed of a mixture of copper and tin, with, perhaps, a portion of silver, as were some of the metallic mirrors used among the ancients. But the originality of the mirror among the Chinese is more conspicuous in the form than the composition. It has a knob in the centre of the back, by which it can be held, and on the rest of the back are stamped certain circles in relief, with a kind of Grecian border. Its polished surface has that degree of convexity which gives an image of the face half its natural size; and its remarkable property is, that when the rays of the sun are reflected from the polished surface, the image of the ornamental border, and circles stamped upon the back, are seen reflected on the wall. By this art, as Brewster observes, the artist has contrived to make the observer deceive himself. The stamped figures on the back are used for this purpose. The spectrum in the luminous area is *not* an image of the figures on the back. The figures are a copy of the picture which the artist has drawn on the face of the mirror, and so concealed by polishing, that it can only be brought to light by the rays of the sun.

The native ingenuity of the Chinese has been thus noticed by Sir George Staunton:—"Two of them took down the two magnificent glass lustres sent as presents to the emperor, in order to place them in a more advantageous position. They

separated them piece by piece, and put them together again without difficulty or mistake, the whole consisting of many thousand pieces, though they had never seen anything of the kind before. Another Chinese cut a narrow slip from the edge of a curved plate of glass, in order to supply the place of one belonging to the dome of the Planetarium, which had been broken. The English mechanics belonging to the embassy had in vain attempted to cut the glass according to this curved line, with the assistance of a diamond. The native workman did not show his method; but it was said he succeeded by first drawing the point of a heated iron across the surface to be divided."

In sculpture, as regards the art of cutting stone into imitative forms of living objects, the Chinese are very defective. Their sculptured figures in stone are altogether rude, both in form and proportion. And it may be owing to this lack of skill in the art of sculpture, that their gods are never represented in stone, but always in modelled clay. No very great anatomical skill is required, as the figures, unlike those in the Grecian Pantheon in general, are always clothed. The drapery in which they are enveloped, and which is executed with much truth and effect, conceals their deficiency of skill in modelling. If exhibited in a state of nudity, their idols would appear a caricature of human beings, rather than imitations. The same deficiency of skill is, also, displayed in their sculptured representations of flowers.

In drawing and painting, where a scientific

adherence to the rules of perspective are not required, the Chinese are sometimes very successful; but perspective is disregarded, and as for shading, they object to its introduction. "When several portraits," says Mr. Barrow, "intended as presents for the emperor, were exposed to view, the mandarins observing the variety of tints occasioned by the light and shade, asked whether the originals had the right and left sides of the figure of different colours? They considered the shadow of the nose as a great imperfection in the figure, and some supposed it to have been placed there by accident." But though the Chinese disregard the rules of perspective and shading, their drawings by the eye are often tolerably correct. They paint insects, birds, fruits, and flowers very beautifully, and with great vividness of colour. Still their representations of living objects are very stiff; the life, which can only render paintings celebrated, is wanting. The Chinese, however, are not incapable of producing better things; for some native artists employed at Canton and Macao, by English naturalists, have delineated various specimens in botany and zoology scientifically.

Of the music of the Chinese, Gutzlaff remarks:—"During all our peregrinations, having been present at the celebration of marriages and funerals, and at the review of troops, we have never been able to make out a single air. Musical notes, though known, are not in common use. A band of music consists of the loud gong, large and small drums, cymbals, pipes, various flutes, trumpets like those made for children, horns, which are instruments with many pipes, a guitar

with one or two strings, and a variety of others; amongst which are bells, hung up in a frame, in order to give an harmonious chime. The principle on which a concert is played appears to be which of the musicians shall outdo the other in loudness of sound, in which attempt the beater of the gong generally succeeds to admiration."

The particular names of the Chinese instruments of music, as furnished by Lay, are, the urh-heen, or two-stringed fiddle, the bow of which passes between the strings; the pepa, san-heen, and yue-kin, three different kinds of guitar; the kin, or scholar's lute, on which Confucius and the sages of antiquity played, and which has seven silk strings; the tsang, a kind of lute, with sixteen strings of wire; the yang-kin, a kind of dulcimer, furnished with brass strings, which are struck with two small hammers; the hwang-teih, a keyless flute, made of bamboo; the heang-teih, a species of clarinet, with a bell at the end, which has the same effect upon the sound of the tube as the speaking trumpet has upon the human voice; the lo, or gong, of which there are two kinds, one large and flat, and a smaller one rounded, with a cylindrical edge; the sang, which Lay denominates Jubal's organ; and a great variety of horns, drums, timbrels, and cymbals. Among instruments of percussion, the great bell is very remarkable, being used for various purposes. It is to be seen in all the principal temples, hung in a large wooden stand, where it is struck with a wooden hammer, at vespers and at other times, when prayers are offered.

The instruments of the Chinese are mostly tuned in unison, and they have little or no idea

of accompaniments. "Their gamut," says Huttner, "who was attached to Macartney's embassy, "is such as Europeans would call imperfect, their keys being inconsistent; that is, wandering from flats to sharps, and inversely, except when directed by a bell, struck to sound the proper notes. In playing, they discover no knowledge of semi-tones, nor do they seem to have an idea of counterpoint, or parts in music. There is always one melody, however great the number of performers; though, in a few instances, some of the instruments played in the lower octave, while the rest continued in the upper, and thus approached to harmony."

The houses of the Chinese are tent-like edifices; and their bridges, which have been extolled by the Jesuits as something extraordinary, are found, upon examination, to display no scientific principles. "Something," says Lay, "taught them to connect two banks of a river, by means of stones or bricks laid together, and to leave a hole in the middle to let the water pass through; but there is no evidence to show they ever reflected upon the cause which kept the several parts in their places, or sought any further for it than the mortar or cement by which they were bound together. The architect looked on, displayed his portly form, and plied his fan from time to time, or chatted familiarly with his men, but never ran the risk of a premature wrinkle or look of care, by any speculation about the abstruse doctrines of equilibrium."

The roof of a Chinese building is curved, like the upper part of a tent. This is supported by wooden columns, which are commonly thin in

proportion to their height. In the same manner the ornamental and honorary gateways, in the middle of the Chinese streets, are erected, and the proportions of the whole are weak and flimsy. What with the painting and gilding, however, the Chinese contrive to make these simple constructions look very pretty in the eyes of a foreigner. The outside of the roof is covered with glazed earthen tiles, of a semi-cylindrical form, which are laid on so as to give the surface a variety of ridges and furrows. The inside is composed of a few feet of plain deal timber, a little cheap paint, and mother-of-pearl shells, introduced between the interstices of the laths or rafters. The walls are built of a blue-coloured brick, which, being thin, gives scope for a beautiful inlay of milk-white seams; while under the eaves, a broad band of white is often painted as the ground for an assortment of landscapes and figures. The wall is withdrawn some distance within the eaves, and is perforated by a large doorway, behind which stands a broad screen, to shelter the inmates from the gaze of the passers-by. Four quadrangular pillars support the eaves, opposite the posts of the door, and are connected with the side-walls by a beam ranging a foot or two below the eaves. The edges of the lateral walls are often elaborately carved, so that the portico looks as if it had six pillars in the façade. After passing through this, there is a hall without a front, in which the host receives his guest, or the tutor instructs the children. In this hall there is a partition, which runs part of the distance transversely, so that the family may pass by each end, and cross another area, towards a hall, of the same

construction, for more secluded intercourse. On each side of the court a building stands for the reception of servants. The sleeping apartments stand in a group by themselves.

In this manner all Chinese edifices are erected. Temples, pagodas, palaces, mansions, summer-houses, cottages, and gateways, all display the same mode of construction. The law forbids the architect to depart from it; whence its naked and primitive simplicity. Sometimes, however, by the excellence of the workmanship, they are made to appear very elegant structures, and especially the garden pavilions and pagodas. The manner in which the stones are fitted together in pagodas, makes it appear as if wrought of one piece; and the winding staircase, with many cornices on the outside, has attracted much admiration.

• That the Chinese, however, are capable of producing solid architecture, is proved by the construction, not only of their city walls, but by the great national barrier towards Tartary, and their occasionally detached towers, or castles. These are all built of brick, on a foundation of stone, of such immense solidity, as serves to remind the beholder of the Cyclopiàn walls of ancient Greece—walls which, though they have withstood the shock of ages, yet remain in a high state of preservation. The hands that reared them have long since mouldered into dust, and the glory of the nation is departed for ever; but they remain, and discourse in silent eloquence, as they slowly decay, of the mutability of all things below the skies.

SCIENCE.

If the civilization of a people is to be measured by their skill in the sciences, then the Chinese are but a few stages in advance of barbarism. Educated they may be ; but their education consists almost solely in knowing how to read and write, as the common people of our own country. On abstract science they set no value, apart from obvious and immediate utility ; and hence it forms no part of their studies. If they stumble upon any useful invention, without any effort of the mind, or without going through the by-paths which every man must tread, if he would wish to attain true scientific knowledge, it is all very well ; but if not, the Chinese are content to remain in a state of ignorance.

This peculiarity of the Chinese character seems to be the result of the mode of education practised among them. They learn much of antiquity in their schools, but very little of things which may turn to present use. Their teachers, indeed, both by example and precept, inculcate that the world has attained the *ne plus ultra*, or utmost point of science, and that their pupils may discard thought beyond that which is required for the instruction which they impart. Such a system is an effectual barrier to all improvement.

The actual state of the sciences in China may be compared to their condition in Europe during the middle ages. Thus, for instance, they combine the sciences of medicine and astrology, which was the deplorable condition of the healing art in France and England at the above-mentioned period. In their scheme of physics, on which are

based all their medical as well as other theories, the same ideas are discovered as are to be found in "A modest Treatise of Astrologic," written by one Lilly, in 1647. Both describe Saturn as ruling over the stomach and the earth; Jupiter, over the liver and wood; Mars, over the heart and fire; Venus, over the lungs and metal; and Mercury, over the kidneys and water. Their reasoning on the subject is carried to the extreme point of absurdity. "As," say they, for example, "the upper part of the body partakes of the Yang, and the nature of the heaven, the medicines suited to that part of the body are the heads of plants; while the body of the plant is for diseases of the middle, and the roots for the lower parts."

Such errors being at the foundation of the Chinese medical art, it cannot but follow that the whole system partakes of the nature of quackery. Their list of remedies for diseases are as multifarious as they are absurd. At the head of all drugs stands *gin-seng*, the vivifying effects of which are said to be so great, that if a piece be put into the mouth of a person just deceased, he will again revive! Tea, in various modes of preparation, is much valued as a medicine, and different parts of rare animals are included in their list, with the reputation of multifarious properties. As a drastic medicine, the *croton tiglium* is used in combination with rhubarb. For the alleviation, or removal of local pain, they apply the *moxa*, or actual cautery. This *moxa* is prepared by bruising the stems of an artemisia called *gac-tsau* in a mortar, and then selecting the most downy fibres. These fibres are set on fire upon the part affected, and are said to consume without producing any

severe pain. This, it would appear from Sir W. Temple's testimony, who applied it when in Holland to a part affected by the gout with success, sometimes answers the end proposed ; but it is very different with the remedies applied by Chinese physicians in general. Many notable instances of their ignorance is recorded by Staunton, in his "Embassy to China." When, however, a Chinese physician has been unsuccessful, he consoles himself with the native adage, "There is medicine for sickness, but none for fate!"

Of anatomical knowledge, Chinese physicians are utterly destitute ; and though they occasionally practise a species of forensic medicine, to ascertain from external indications the mode in which any person came by his death, it is but superficial. A mash, composed of grain in a boiling-hot state, is laid over the body, and when it is removed, the judgment is formed from the appearance of the skin and muscles. Their forensic medicine, therefore, is little more than that species of augury used by the ancients to foretel events ; namely, by the appearance of the entrails of an animal offered in sacrifice. Notwithstanding, when the Chinese abandon theory, and are guided by the rules of common sense, they can produce something useful in the medical art. A work founded on personal experience, called *Chang-seng*, has been written by a medical practitioner, which contains some useful knowledge. It is an essay on diet and regimen, and is arranged under the four heads of the passions, diet, the actions of the day, and rest at night. In chemistry, also, as allied to medicine, the Chinese have made some progress. They are, in fact, possessed of a variety

of active preparations of quicksilver, nearly similar to those in use among Europeans. But this knowledge, as in general when they approach the confines of science, may, perhaps, be fairly attributed to the European missionaries; for the Chinese have not yet learned to think for themselves. Before they do that, the sway which despotism and superstition hold over their minds must be broken, and the barrier of custom thrown down.

Of the mathematical sciences, with the exception of the elements of arithmetic and astronomy, the Chinese are entirely ignorant.

The arithmetic of the Chinese, as well as their weights and measures, are based on the decimal scale. Decimal fractions are their vulgar fractions, or those in common use. Their numbers are written in words at length; that is, unlike the Arabic system of numeration, where the powers of the numbers increase or diminish decimally, according to position. The inconvenience arising from this in calculation is obviated by the assistance of the *suân-pân*, or "calculating dish," similar to the abacus used in our infant schools for the purpose of teaching numeration. This "calculating dish" has balls of wood, or ivory, strung upon wires in separate columns, of which one column represents units, with a decimal increase and diminution to the left and right. The board is divided longitudinally, and each ball above the division represents five, while each below it stands only for one. In arithmetical operations, this machine is always used; but at Canton they sometimes write down numbers in abbreviated marks, and place them like our Arabic figures in numerical order.

Concerning the science of astronomy, something has already been said in a previous chapter. See page 65. On this subject, Gutzlaff remarks :—
“The study of astronomy is encouraged principally to furnish the empire with a calendar. Every year, there are three kinds of almanacks published with great solemnity, in Chinese as well as Mantchoo, and forwarded to all the provinces and tributary states. In the smallest of the three, which is the most common, the year is divided into lunar months, with the order of the days in each ; the hour and minute of the rising and setting of the sun ; the length of the days and nights, according to the different elevation of the poles, in every province ; the hour and minute of the conjunctions and oppositions of the sun and moon, or the new and full moon ; the first and last quarters, with the hour and minute ; and when the sun enters into every sign and half sign of the zodiac. The second calendar contains the motions of the planets for every day of the year, as they are to appear in the heavens, with the planet’s distance, in degrees and minutes, from the first star of the nearest constellation, and the day, hour, and minute, of its entrance into every sign. The third calendar, which is presented to the emperor only, in manuscript, contains all the conjunctions of the moon, with the rest of the planets, and the appulses to the fixed stars within the extent of a degree of latitude. In all of them, lucky and unlucky hours, days, and months, are pointed out ; and the proper time for everything, as marriage, travelling, building, etc., is given. By combining the horary and other characters, the comparison with the constellation

and ruling planets, and in fact, every event may be safely foretold, though it generally does not take place."

The cycle of the Chinese consists of sixty years. Their year commences from the nearest new moon to the fifteenth degree of Aquarius, which sign the sun enters in January. From this, spring commences, while summer begins at the fifteenth degree of Taurus; autumn at the fifteenth of Leo; and winter at the fifteenth of Scorpio. Their year consists of twelve lunar months, some of twenty-nine, and some of thirty days. It is also divided into *twenty-four* terms. Every fifth year, they have an intercalary month, in order to adjust the lunations with the course of the sun. Each month, moreover, is divided into three decades, and neither the days nor the months have names, but are counted first, second, third, etc. The Chinese day, like ours, begins at midnight, and is divided into twelve hours, for which the signs are borrowed from the cycle.

What the Chinese know scientifically of astronomy appears to be owing partly to the instructions of the Mohammedans, but chiefly to the Jesuit missionaries attached to the Astronomical Board. Their knowledge, however, is still very imperfect. Astrological observations, vain and fallacious though they be, better suit their genius and their tastes. The emperor is, in truth, the great patron of astrology; for he will not undertake anything except he is first assured that it is in accordance with the starry heavens; whence it is natural that the Chinese should prefer the cultivation of astrology to that of astronomy. The mysteries of astronomy and astrology are wielded

as an engine of power over the ignorance of the people. The government has declared it death to publish a counterfeit or imitation of the Imperial Almanack, and it countenances the extravagancies of the populace during the observation of an eclipse, and the terror caused by the appearance of a comet. When an eclipse occurs, the emperor goes through sundry ceremonies, and affects to consider it as a warning to him for some mal-administration.

In geometry they are very deficient ; and, by a natural consequence, they have no correct notions of geography. But for the Jesuits, they might even now have represented their country as the centre of a circle, studded round with foreign nations, as they did anciently. Taught by them, under the patronage of the enlightened Kang-he, they have laid down every province separately on the spherical projection, with lines of latitude, calculated from the equator, and meridians of longitude. But these maps are inaccurate ; and as for everything external to their own country and Tartary, they scarcely give it a thought. They possess a rough map of the two terrestrial hemispheres, supplied them by the Jesuits, which is their only work on general geography.

The foregoing will tend to show that the Chinese are not distinguished for scientific knowledge. Many instances, however, might be adduced, in which the Chinese appear to have been the authors of many useful inventions, without the previous possession of any scientific clue. Thus, in the science of mechanics and machinery, without any theoretical knowledge, they apply all the mechanical powers, except the screw, with

considerable effect. In navigation, also, it seems clear that they first discovered the use of the compass; and, without knowing anything of optics, which treat of the convergence and divergence of rays of light, they use both convex and concave glasses, or rather spectacles of rock crystal, to assist their sight.

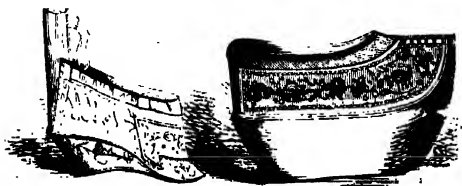
In many instances, however, it may be suspected that the knowledge of inventions ascribed to the Chinese was borrowed from the European missionaries. The Chinese seem to be, indeed, creatures of, and adepts in, the art of imitation. They have been known to attempt copies of European telescopes; but science being requisite in the construction of these instruments, they failed. In the kaleidoscope, however, they succeeded to a marvel. One of these having reached Canton, it was imitated, manufactured in vast quantities, and sent up the country under the name of *wán-huá-tung*, "the tube of ten thousand flowers."

Proud boasters as the Chinese are, therefore, of human knowledge, and which they distribute under the three heads of Heaven, Earth, and Man, they have yet much to learn even in the arts and conveniences of life. Their national pride and ignorance prevent them from acknowledging, or even discerning this; but the fact is self-evident to every enlightened reader of their history. How, then, is their improvement to be effected? The spirit of the Chinese is borne down by superstition, slavish custom, and oppression; it therefore must come from Europe: and shall it be denied them? Shall those who have derived from

" the true and only God,
And from the faith derived through Him who bled

Upon the cross, a marvellous advance
Of good from evil; as if one extreme
Were left, the other gain'd;"

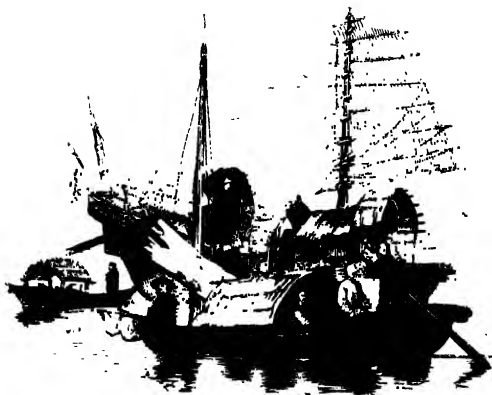
deny the blessings which they experience unto others sitting in total darkness, and going down to the grave by thousands upon thousands daily, without God, and without hope in the world? That were a blot upon the Christian character never to be effaced. The light of Christianity must be diffused throughout China. The cost may be great; but the achievement of raising that nation from a state of moral and mental degradation will be so glorious, that, compared with it, the gold and silver spent will appear as things of nought. Let Christians pour out bountifully of their abundance, that the reproach of the heathen may not fall upon them in the day of judgment. Freely as they have received the word of life, so should they freely give to those who stand in need of the blessing.



CHINESE SHOES.

CHAPTER IX.

THE COMMERCE OF THE CHINESE.



SHIPPING AND BOATS.

INTERCOURSE WITH THE ANCIENTS.

ALTHOUGH the Chinese are an essentially agricultural people, and although their policy has ever been to live secluded from the rest of mankind, yet history relates that some of the treasures of their country very early found their way into the distant parts of the earth. This is more especially the case with reference to the article of silk. After silk was known in Europe, it was always represented as coming from some remote country, and this country has been subsequently mentioned

as *Thinæ*, *Sinæ*, and *Serica*, or the country of the *Seres*, all which have reference to China.

A knowledge of China cannot be traced back to a more remote period than the age of Alexander. The Macedonian Greeks, having carried their arms into India, there heard of it under the ancient names of *Thinæ* and *Sinæ*; but this was not the origin of commerce with China. Anterior to that date the Greeks had used silk, and it appears probable that it was used in Western Asia before it was known to the Greeks. It was from Western Asia that the Greeks first obtained it, and they used it long before they knew whence the substance came. Centuries passed, indeed, before they, or even the Romans, had any information about the remote country from which silk came, or of the manner in which it was produced. Thus Virgil supposed that the *Seres* carded the silk from leaves; and Dionysius, the geographer, conceived it to be a vegetable product. In the days of Pausanias more distinct information had been obtained concerning the silk-worm, and the country whence it came; and about A.D. 166, the increasing demand for the article, with the increase of luxury among the Romans, suggested the idea of a direct commercial intercourse with China. The emperor Marcus Antoninus sent an embassy thither for the purpose, but the policy of that empire was as exclusive then as it is at the present day. The embassy was coldly received, and a second embassy in 284 met with a similar reception. The Romans were compelled still to receive the article through an indirect medium, and the question may be asked, what that medium was? Ancient authors furnish so little informa-

tion about China, and their notions of the country, moreover, are so obscure, that it would be difficult to describe the direct route by which the silk of the "remote east" found its way into Europe. In the earliest ages, however, it would appear that silk was brought from China, where it was originally found, to India, by an inland communication, beginning from the bay of Issus in Cilicia; and that it was brought out of India by the Red Sea to Egypt, and thence to Greece and Rome. At a later date, the Romans obtained it from Persia. Merchants of Samarcand and Bokhara proceeded through the northern provinces of Chinese Tartary, by a dangerous and difficult route, to China; these on their return transported it into Persia, and the Persian merchants sold it to the Romans at the fairs of Armenia and Nisibis. About A.D. 550, the Persians had obtained the monopoly of the whole silk trade; and whatever nation desired this article of luxury was compelled to seek it from them. They were so jealous of the trade, that no person from the west was allowed to traverse the dominions of Persia towards China, nor was any traveller thence allowed to proceed to the west. They were thus enabled to control the supply, so that the inhabitants of Tyre and Berytus in Phenicia, who had manufactured the article for the Roman market, were sometimes unable to procure an adequate quantity of the raw material. In the reign of Justinian, indeed, an event happened which put an end to the indirect intercourse between China and Europe, and in a short time served to obscure the slight knowledge which had been obtained of that country. The government

of Constantinople put an entire stop to the importation of silk, and in this extremity Justinian applied to the Arabians, and to the king of Abyssinia, hoping to induce them to undertake the import of the raw material. His application, however, was unsuccessful, and the luxurious Romans had the mortifying prospect before them of being compelled to substitute cotton for silk. But an incident occurred which furnished the means through which an abundant supply of the raw material was eventually procured. Two Nestorian monks of Persia, who had travelled to Serindi, or China, had made themselves acquainted with the history and treatment of the silk-worm, as well as the process of manufacture. These monks stated their information to the emperor, who engaged them to return to Serindi, and bring away some of the eggs of the silk-worm. Accordingly they returned to Serindi, and secured a quantity of the eggs, which they deposited in a hollow cane, and brought to Constantinople. These eggs were hatched by the heat of a dunghill, and the worms were fed with mulberry leaves; and from that time silk was manufactured in Europe.

The manner in which the Chinese anciently conducted commerce, may be gathered from a passage in Vincent's *Periplus*, in which they are spoken of as trading with a Tartar race called *Sesatæ*. The passage reads thus:—"The *Sesatæ* are a race of men squat and thick set, with their face broad, and their nose greatly depressed. The articles they bring for trade are of great bulk, and enveloped in mats or sacks, which in their outward appearance resemble the early leaves of

the vine. Their place of assembly is between their own borders and those of the Thinaë ; and here spreading out their mats, on which they exhibit their goods for sale, they hold a fair for several days, and at the conclusion of it return to their own country in the interior. Upon their retreat, the Thinaë, who have continued on the watch, repair to the spot, and collect the mats which the strangers left behind at their departure : from these they pick out the haultm, which is called *petros*, and drawing out the fibres, spread the leaves double, and make them into balls, and then pass the fibres through them. Of these balls there are three sorts, the large, the middle sized, and the small : in this form they take the name of *mala-bathrum*, and under this denomination the three sorts of that masticatory are brought into India."

. At a more recent date, the process of traffic with the Chinese is thus described by Pomponius Mela :—"The Seres are a nation celebrated for their justice, and have become known to us by their commerce ; for they leave their merchandise in the desert, and then retire, until the merchants they deal with have left a price, or barter, for the amount, which, upon their departure, the Seres return and take."

That the Thinaë and Seres were one and the self-same people, is proved, by the similarity observable in their mode of traffic. By the same test it is discovered, that both were the Chinese ; for their land trade is to this day conducted in the same manner. They still retain their character for exclusiveness.

INTERCOURSE WITH THE MODERNS.

After the age of Justinian, all traces of European intercourse with China, whether directly or indirectly, are lost for a series of ages. In the ninth century, the Arabians appear to have extended their commerce by sea to the southern coasts of China, while their caravans maintained a land intercourse with that country, through Persia and Tibet, or India. The knowledge of this intercourse was furnished by two Mohammedan travellers, who were there about the middle of the ninth century. Such was the state of learning, however, that this knowledge was not made known to Europeans till 1718, when this work was translated and published by the abbé Renaudot. Still Europe had benefited from the Arabian intercourse with China. The art of paper-making was introduced by them in the eleventh century; and soon after they taught Europeans the art of block-printing, of making pendulum clocks, and the use of the mariner's compass. All these arts had been long in the possession of the Chinese, and it seems probable, that the Arabs gathered a knowledge of them from that people, and brought them into Europe.

The Arabian merchants appear to have been privileged to enter into the interior of China. Their geographical works, at least, mention the names of various cities, though it is not always easy to discover to what town their descriptions refer. But this much can be collected, that the northern provinces were called Cathay; the southern, Tchin, or Sin; and that the capital of the country was called Cambalu.

In the thirteenth century, some information concerning China was collected from Tartary. The conquests of Genghis Khan and his successors, and the encroachments of the Tartars upon the eastern frontiers of Europe, induced the pope to send two embassies to the Tartarian camps. When the second of these embassies arrived, they found ambassadors from Persia, India, Russia, and China; and they obtained correct information as to what part of China the Tartars had then subjugated, and some little knowledge of the people. In describing the latter, Carpini, who was at the head of this embassy, says:—"They seem to be a mild and humanized people; they wear no beard, and in their face rather resemble the Mongols, though their face is not so broad. They have a peculiar language of their own; and better artisans, in all sorts of work, cannot be found. Their country abounds in corn, wine, gold, silver, and silks; and, in short, in every thing desirable for life."

A few years posterior to the date of these embassies, Louis ix. of France despatched two ambassadors to the Tartars, on hearing that they were well disposed toward the Christian faith. These ambassadors penetrated through the heart of Asia to Karakorum, at that time the capital of the khan of the Tartars. This city was not far from the confines of China, and it abounded with Chinese; so that the ambassadors, while there, learned much both of the country and the people.

In the meantime, commerce sent forth private adventurers, who greatly contributed to a knowledge of China. Among these the family of the Poli, of Venice, is very conspicuous. Maffeo

and Nicolo Polo, two brothers, being informed that an advantageous commercial speculation might be made with the Tartars on the Voïga, went thither ; and on their return they met with an ambassador from Kublai, the great khan, who invited them to his court. This was accepted, and they were held in such high estimation by Kublai, that he commissioned them to request the pope to send him one hundred learned men to teach Christianity and the "Seven Sciences" in his dominion. Shortly after they had reached Europe, Gregory x. was raised to the papal throne ; and he so far complied with the khan's request as to send two individuals, who were reputed men of letters and science, as well as good theologians. At the same time Marco Polo, the son of Maffeo, was sent with some presents to the khan, and proper diplomatic credentials. When Marco arrived, the khan had made himself master of the empire of China, and he was detained in his suite for more than twenty years. Here he had opportunities of making himself acquainted with both the country and the people. He published an account of the country in manuscript copies ; and it was at first believed ; but in a short time it became the fashion to decry his work as a tissue of romance.

A few years after the return of Marco Polo, one Oderic de Porteneau, a friar, seized with a desire to visit the remote and infidel countries of the east, penetrated into Southern China, and visited Cambalu. The Tartar government still existed, and on his return, he published an account of it, which agreed with that of Marco Polo. The statements of Oderic, however, were treated

with even more scepticism than those of the Venetian. From that time, until the nations of Europe commenced a system of commercial enterprise, great and mighty as the empire of China was, it was only heard of incidentally. About the commencement of the fourteenth century, an Armenian monk gave some information to Clement v. concerning the history and geography of those remote regions; and some further details were given by the Persian historian, Mirkhond, and some Persian travellers: but their accounts produced no desire in the breasts of Europeans to visit the country, or to trade with the people.

At length, in the sixteenth century, the fame of the empire reached some Portuguese, who had established themselves at Malacca; and having satisfied themselves by ocular demonstration that such a nation existed, and proved it to the government, the Portuguese authorities sent missions to the emperor, in order to establish a free trade with the country. At first, they were permitted to trade at the port of Tamon, and afterwards at Ningpo and Chinchou; but, in consequence of their behaviour, they were successively expelled from these towns. While they were engaged in the trade at Sanshan, however, they assisted the Chinese in clearing the seas of some pirates, by whom the neighbourhood of Canton was infested; and they received, as the reward of their services, the exclusive right to trade with China for many years, and the possession of the island of Macao. The Portuguese still nominally retain this island; but Chinese soldiers mount guard at the landing-place, and Chinese edicts control the commands of the Portuguese authorities.

The discovery of the empire of China, and the early proceedings of the Portuguese in that country, excited a great sensation in Europe. A century, however, passed away, before any other nation seemed disposed to dispute their advantages. Early in the seventeenth century, the Dutch, who were their rivals in the commerce of India, determined to meet them as such on the shores of the "celestial empire." An embassy sent to the court of China for that purpose failed, chiefly, it would seem, from their singular appearance, which alarmed the Chinese, and from the aspersions of the Portuguese, who inspired the government with much suspicion of the new visitors. Thus repulsed, and unable to obtain any Chinese goods, except through the medium of the Portuguese, the Dutch resolved to obtain by force what they were unable to do by negotiation. A fleet was fitted out and placed under the command of Admiral Kiezerzoon, who succeeded in capturing one of the Pehou islands, situated between Formosa and the mainland. Still the Chinese would hold no friendly intercourse with them, alleging that they would never treat with persons who kept possession of any part of the imperial territories; and informing them, that if they would retire to Formosa, which was then out of the Chinese dominion, they would treat with them. The Dutch *did* retire to Formosa; but it was subsequently wrested from them by Coxinga, who governed the southern provinces of Quangsee, Quangtung, and Fokien, and who rebelled against the emperor. In their war with Coxinga, the Chinese called in the aid of the Dutch, and he fell before their united

forces. This led to the establishment of the Dutch at Canton, where they were allowed to build a house for the purpose of trade, which they soon converted into a fortress. A battery only was wanting to make it a citadel, and the Dutch were desirous of thus establishing their power in China. They employed themselves in bringing in cannon clandestinely; but their treachery being discovered, their vessels were burned, their fort demolished, all Dutchmen were banished, and trade forbidden with them on pain of death. Notwithstanding, the memory of this attempt appears to have been soon obliterated, for, in 1762, they were again permitted to establish a factory at Canton. Their trade with China, however, was interrupted by the war between England and Holland; and though, since the fall of Napoleon, it has been resumed, the Dutch have not been able to recover the relative position in the trade which they occupied anterior to that date.

The Russians have been more successful in establishing a trade with China. Involved in territorial disputes with that nation, at length negotiations ensued, and, in 1689, a treaty was signed, by which Russia, on condition of being permitted to trade with China, agreed to abandon an extensive territory on the Chinese frontier, to destroy the fortress of Albazin, and to surrender the navigation of the river Amour. This treaty has since been ratified by Peter the Great, and by it Russia has gained considerably greater privileges than have ever been accorded to any other European nation by the Chinese government. Still the trade between these two empires is one of mere barter. It is carried on solely at Kiakhta,

on the frontiers of the two countries, each nation carrying its goods to that mart to exchange with those of the other. The profits arising therefrom are valuable to Russia; but, by a fundamental law of China, no nation can trade at two points, and Russia is in consequence excluded from the more valuable trade at Canton.

The intercourse of America with China has been strictly commercial; it commenced in 1784, and it has gradually increased, till it has acquired an importance second only to that of Great Britain.

It is in connexion with the trade of Great Britain that the nature of Chinese commerce, and the manner in which it is conducted, will be more fully unfolded.

The first attempt of the English to establish commercial intercourse with China was made in the days of Elizabeth. In 1596, Sir Robert Dudley was commissioned to sail thither; and he carried with him a letter to "The most high, serene, and powerful prince and ruler of the great kingdom of China, the greatest empire in the eastern parts of the world." But Dudley never reached China, and never returned home, and his fate remains a mystery. The English were brought into actual contact with the Chinese, however, in the year 1605. Sir E. Michelbourne obtained a patent for trading to the eastern seas, and not finding the Chinese favourably disposed to commerce, he not only seized the ships of any nation he met with, but plundered several valuable Chinese junks. This was an untoward action, for it had the effect of prejudicing the minds of the Chinese against the English, which prejudice was fostered by the Portuguese. The English

were designated the enemies of China, trade with them was expressly prohibited, and they continued for many years the most abhorred of all the nations of Europe.

The enmity of the Chinese towards the English was made manifest in 1637, when another attempt was made to establish a commercial intercourse between the two countries. At that date, the British merchants sent four ships and a pinnace, under the command of Captain Weddel, to Macao, which was in the possession of the Portuguese. While here, the pinnace, with fifty men, and a ship's barge, were despatched to the river of Canton, and on reaching an anchorage they landed, and were hospitably entertained at a native village. In their subsequent progress up the river they met with a fleet of twenty junks, and were hospitably invited on board, and a Portuguese negro, who understood Chinese, interpreted between them and their hosts. All seemed to augur well; for the Chinese offered to conduct the officers to Canton, where they might present the petition for trade which they had with them to the viceroy, provided the pinnace would instantly return to Macao. This was agreed to; but before they had reached Canton, they were met by a boat from the viceroy, and informed that their petition should be granted if they would return to Macao:

Not wishing to give offence, the English officers returned to Macao; but, instead of the expected arrangements, they found only derision for their credulity. Thus incensed, the whole fleet sailed for Canton, and they had advanced as far as the Bocca Tigris, when they were met by some official personages, who, after some specious

explanations of their conduct, promised the officers that they should positively have an audience of the viceroy if they would remain at anchor for six days. Although justly suspicious of the good faith of the Chinese, the English consented to remain at anchor; but, on the fourth day, they were suddenly cannonaded from a neighbouring fortification. Their shot being ill-directed, however, did little harm, and before they could again discharge their unwieldy artillery, the English guns bore upon their batteries, and made fearful havoc. In two hours the fort was taken, the Chinese utterly dispersed, and the British flag waved for the first time in the air of China.

Still the English were unwilling to continue hostile towards the Chinese. They abandoned their advantages, and made another attempt to address the viceroy. But again they were deceived. Some officers were permitted to present their petition to the viceroy, and leave was granted to the English to take possession of some small island outside the river, which they might fortify, and make the centre of their commerce. Trade was already commenced, and everything appeared to be going on prosperously; but, on a sudden, an attempt was made to destroy the English fleet at Macao by means of fire-ships, and the officers at Canton were confined in the house they occupied, while food and fire were denied them, and a guard placed at the door to prevent their escape. The attempt on the English fleet proved abortive; and the crew, enraged at the detention of their officers, laid waste plantations, destroyed villages, and sunk or disabled all the vessels they could meet with. This destruction

soon determined the Chinese to a more pacific line of conduct. The officers were released, and the English permitted to conclude their trade; but they had no sooner quitted the river, than an edict was issued, strictly prohibiting all trade with the English nation.

The terror of the English, which this event caused in China, was of long duration. Twenty years after, when the Dutch petitioned to be allowed to trade with the Chinese, they were informed that they must prove themselves not to be Englishmen before their petition was granted. The English, it was stated, had arrived in the river with ships of war, which had not only beaten their navy, but had battered their castles, taken their great men prisoners, fighting more like demons than men, whereby they had become the declared enemies of China.

Subsequent to this event, several attempts were made by the English to gain a footing in China, but they were unavailing. At length, however, from the assistance rendered by them to the Chinese in the southern provinces against the Tartars, who had subjugated the north to their sway, they procured a residence on the islands of Amoy and Quemoy. But the reduction of the whole empire by the Tartars soon afterwards deprived them of this advantage, and it was not till near the end of the century that they were allowed to partake of their commerce with other European nations.

The commercial intercourse of this country was first carried on through the medium of the East India Company, under whose management it flourished. The trade of the East India Company

with China, however, was brought to a close, according to the provisions of a new act, which rendered the trade free, in April, 1834, after having lasted just two centuries. Soon after this, several ships quitted Canton with cargoes of tea for the British islands, and the trade continued, with some interruptions, till 1839, when the Chinese required that all opium ships should be sent away, under the penalty of hostile measures. This requisition was disregarded, and a demand was then made that all the opium on board the ships should be delivered to the government for the purpose of being destroyed. It was further demanded, that a bond should be given in the Chinese and foreign languages; that the ships should hereafter never dare to bring opium; and that, should any be brought, the goods should be forfeited, and the parties suffer death.

These demands were made under a show of determined hostility, and from these circumstances Captain Elliot, then British superintendent of the trade at Canton, required the surrender of all the English opium on the coast of China, and 20,283 chests of that baneful drug were delivered to the commissioners appointed by the Chinese government, from the ships assembled for that purpose below the Bocca Tigris. At the same time, the British superintendent gave a bond to the owners as an indemnity. Still the Chinese government was not satisfied. Hostilities commenced, and war with China was the consequence, the events of which are doubtless fresh in the minds of the reader. The result of that war has, so far as commerce is concerned, proved favourable to the English nation. By it indemnification

has been procured for all the ravages committed upon the English merchants by the Chinese, and the trade between the two countries established upon a broader foundation than it has ever been before. The English, indeed, have virtually gained some settlements in the Chinese territory; and there can be little doubt but they will be able to maintain their position, and keep the extensive empire of China in awe. By it, the Chinese have discovered their weakness, and quietly submitted to the power of Great Britain.

It is to be feared, however, that the population of China will still possess the opportunity of inhaling the fatal drug, which has caused so many millions to sleep the sleep of death. But if some of our countrymen still persist in the traffic, let it be the duty of others to endeavour to counteract its evils. There is an impression among the Chinese, that the object which the English have in view by introducing opium into the country, is to weaken and enfeeble the "celestial empire," for some ulterior purpose. One of the emperor's edicts says, that "the English are of a violent, overbearing disposition, and that they have long cherished plans great and deep." They may be long-sighted, but their vision has certainly not extended to any such futurity; and it is to be hoped, that our nation will prove to their calumniators, that as a body of people they desire their temporal and eternal welfare—that while some few seek individual gain, even at the expense of the souls and bodies of their fellow-men, many are ready to make a sacrifice of their temporal goods on their behalf.

All foreign commerce, the inland trade

excepted, is carried on at Canton. For this purpose, honggs, or factories, are built along the bank of the river, extending backwards in depth a hundred and thirty yards, into a long narrow lane, on each side of which are confined the abodes of foreigners. Holman gives the following list of these establishments, with the intervening thoroughfares, in the order in which they appear to a person coming up the river:—

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Creek hong, Magniac and Co. | 9 Dent and Co. |
| 2 Dutch hong. | 10 American hong. |
| 3 Dutch factory. | |
| 4 British factory. | |
| | OLD CHINA STREET. |
| | 11 Hong merchants. |
| | 12 French hong. |
| | 13 Spanish hong. |
| HOG LANE. | |
| 5 Chow-chow hong. | |
| 6 Hired factory. | |
| 7 Messrs. Russel and Co. | NEW CHINA STREET. |
| 8 Imperial hong. | 14 Danish hong. |

Abeel gives an interesting description of the appearance which the open space in front of the factories presents at different hours of the day. He says:—"It is the rendezvous of multitudes of the natives, who assemble daily, to transact business, gratify curiosity, or murder time. It is level for a short distance, beyond which, it stretches over a large pile of rubbish, deposited here, after the desolating fire of 1822, and retained, notwithstanding numerous applications for its removal, as a lasting and growing nuisance to foreigners.

"As the morning opens upon this scene, silence retires, and the ears of the stranger are assailed by a new and peculiar combination of sounds. Human voices of harsh, drawling tones, cries of

confined dogs and cats, screams of roughly-handled poultry, notes of feathered songsters, some of them admirably gifted and trained, with at times an accompaniment of very unmusical instruments, all unite in this inharmonious concert. The occupations of the tradesmen are varied. Meat, fish, vegetables, fruit, drugs, manufactures; everything saleable, is brought to the general market. A number convey their portable kitchens hither, and prepare such dishes as suit the palates and purses of this promiscuous concourse. Others plant the barber's shop, or its necessary apparatus, in a convenient place, and spend their leisure hours in lolling about and conversation. Those who frequent the place for trade, are probably less numerous than the groups of idlers, who pass their time in listening to stories, witnessing juggling tricks, attending the operations and lectures of empirics, gaping at objects of novelty, and too frequently endeavouring to obtain each other's money by gambling.

“When the sun is oppressive the crowd retires, with the exception of the hucksters, who intercept his withering beams by temporary tilts. The erection of tents is a liberty not sanctioned by law, or rather, contrary to the oral prohibitions of the petty officers who have charge of the square. Consequently, when men of authority make their appearance, the scene suddenly changes. From the moment of alarm, there is the most hasty despatch, until everything is removed that militates against their order. Their exit appears to be regarded as the signal of re-erection, and all things speedily revert to their former state. Such a show of subjection, with real contempt for

authority, when it opposes individual gain, is said to be a prominent feature of the nation."

In moralizing upon the mass of unaccountable beings met with at Canton, Abeel remarks:—"In surveying this multitude, there are a great many points of interest to the eye of Christian compassion and benevolence. Independent of the associations which are common to all the heathen, there are facts of importance peculiar to this daily throng. Great numbers of them can read, and are attracted by every publication that meets their eyes. It is customary to paste up advertisements in the most public place of the square and the streets, and the groups generally found through the day gathered around them show their eagerness to catch at every piece of information. What a place for the operations of the press, sacred to the cause of the Redeemer!"

As traders, the Chinese are eminently active, persevering, and intelligent. They are, in truth, a highly commercial people. Business is transacted with great despatch, and it is affirmed that there is no part of the world where cargoes may be sold and bought, unloaded and loaded, with more business-like speed and activity. An instance of this despatch is furnished by an American writer thus:—"While our officers were at dinner, Mr. Lattimer left the table for a moment, and returned so soon that he was scarcely missed. He informed his guests, that he had made a sale, while absent, of opium, to the amount of two thousand dollars, and assured them that the Chinese are remarkably expert in business. Shopkeepers, from whom you may buy the most trifling article, supply ships with cargoes worth two

hundred thousand dollars, and will contract to do so, with all the necessary security, in the length of time he had been absent from the table. They will manage all the smuggling, if any be necessary; get all the chops for duties; and deliver the articles on board the ship at Liutin, Whampoa, or Macao."

The articles of import and export to be met with at Canton are too numerous to be mentioned. It will be sufficient to say that Europe pours many of her natural productions, and some of her manufactures, into China; and that China, in return, sends its most valuable productions, natural and artificial, into Europe. Of these productions tea holds the first rank; and the importance of our commerce may be seen in the fact that since the commencement of the present century, about 1,000,000,000 lbs. have been sold into England, yielding an enormous revenue to the exchequer, without any cost or trouble in collecting. Well has it been said by the poet Cowper, that

' the bond of commerce was design'd
To associate all the branches of mankind;
And if a boundless plenty be the robe,
Trade is the golden girdle of the globe.
Wise to promote whatever ends he means,
God opens fruitful nature's various scenes:
Each climate needs what other climes produce,
And offers something to the general use;
No land but listens to the common call,
And in return receives supply from all."

Still the present European trade dwindles to a mere point, when compared with the extent of the empire, and the amount of its population. The direct annual revenue accruing from

Canton has been ascertained to exceed, annually, 1,200,000 taels, about 400,000*l.* sterling, on imports alone; but this bears no proportion to indirect gains arising from trade. Contributions are exacted from the hong merchants under various names, as "Uses of the army," "Imperial tribute," "Yellow river dues," etc.; and the Consoo fund, at first intended as a provision for defraying the debts of bankrupt hong, is a rich source of revenue to the Chinese, as well as a heavy loss to foreign traders. Besides this, the inferior offices of the customs at Canton, being farmed out, are maintained by irregular charges on European commerce.

Extensive as the commerce with China, then, appears to be, it is yet a field almost unexplored. It is hoped that recent events will afford the merchant more ample scope than heretofore; that he will be permitted eventually to enter into the interior of China. Such a consummation is devoutly to be wished not only for the prosperity of Europe, but for the spiritual well-being of the Chinese. For if the merchant were allowed to carry his wares into the heart of the country, the missionary might carry there the infinitely richer treasures of the word of life.

The Consoo fund is derived from charges, amounting to about three per cent. laid by the hong merchants on foreign exports and imports.



CHAPTER X.

THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE CHINESE.



GROUP OF THE LOWER CLASSES—UMBRELLA MENDER.

THE hope entertained by Christians that China will one day prove a highway for the heralds of salvation, is not unfounded. A change has already taken place. Until recently, its peculiarities of manners, customs, education, government, religions, and its acknowledged antiquity, have been concealed from the observation of other nations. Now, however, some have visited this country, and some have even penetrated into the interior, and made themselves acquainted with the habits of the people. We believe that the Almighty has designs of mercy toward China,

and in his own good time they will be accomplished. At his word,

“Every valley shall be exalted,
And every mountain and hill shall be made low:
And the crooked shall be made straight,
And the rough places plain.
And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
And all flesh shall see it together.”—ISA. XL. 1, 5.

Information has already been given concerning education among the Chinese.

Historians, as Confucius, depicted the ancients as they deemed they might have been, rather than as they were. Their guide was tradition, and that being blind, led them astray. Fallible as reason is, it would have proved a better teacher; for had they drawn a correct inference from the defective state of society in their own days, when education was more general than in the remote ages, they must have become convinced of its utter insufficiency.

How powerless to produce right moral conduct the mode of education in China is, may be seen in several of the preceding chapters. This will be more clearly discerned, however, in a description of the manners and customs of the people, which may be subdivided under four general terms, namely, the Character and Domestic Institutions of the Chinese; Ceremonial Usages; Amusements; and Costume and Domestic Manners.

THE CHARACTER AND DOMESTIC INSTITUTIONS OF THE CHINESE.

Speaking of the character of the Chinese, Gutzlaff remarks:—“Generally, they may be considered an agricultural people, whose density of

population exceeds the means of their subsistence. The consequences are very obvious. The capital being divided into endless sections, many individuals are without a portion; and whilst the majority earn a scanty subsistence by the sweat of their brow, a very numerous class has nothing on which to depend. On the one hand, such a state prompts to the most unwearied exertion, merely for the sake of maintaining life; industry is no longer a matter of choice, but becomes a necessary and constant habit, whilst the least intermission of it leads to misery. On the other hand, man's mind thus ground down to the earth, cannot aspire to higher things: in supplying the most urgent bodily wants, every thought is absorbed, the same necessities and cares present themselves daily, and there is neither time nor inclination to seek for mental or spiritual improvement. Those who are left portionless must contrive for themselves, and either starve or become rogues to prolong their existence. Hence the vast numbers of beggars and vagabonds which are met with everywhere, and the thousands who are constantly perishing from want of food. The economical habits of the Chinese, also, may thus be explained; for waste produces want; and their feeding upon any substance which yields nourishment, how loathsome soever, is no longer a matter of absurd predilection, but of absolute necessity. Their clothing, dwellings, and whole mode of life, amply bespeak the necessity by which they are controlled. Those classes who are above want are too deeply tinged with the national spirit not to show themselves Chinese by their grovelling desires. Sensual inclinations operate instead of

want, and to satisfy these they are as eager as the poorer classes to procure a livelihood. Their habits degenerate into sloth, because they consider it beneath their dignity to engage in labour; and the length of the nails is used to indicate their exemption from menial occupation. If they do, however, engage in literary pursuits, the same industry which animated the peasant is visible in their studies; they actually toil to obtain knowledge, and carefully store up their acquisitions."

A marked feature in the character of the Chinese is their love of money. All their thoughts and pursuits are centred in "the mammon of unrighteousness." And this ruling passion during life is strong even in the hour of death. They seek to establish a rate of exchange beyond the grave! They are in the habit of burning paper laid over with thin plates, under the impression that its ashes will take the value of dollars in the other world! Their gods are rewarded for their favours after the same manner; and as more than a thousand papers can be bought for a dollar, and each one when reduced to ashes is worth that sum, this is deemed a profitable mode of remittance! So vain are they in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts are darkened.

The favourable parts of the Chinese character are mildness, docility, industry, peaceableness, subordination, and respect for the aged. These, however, are accompanied by the vices of insincerity, falsehood, mutual distrust, and jealousy. No disgrace is attached to lying and deceit among them, and it is praiseworthy if practised towards foreigners. Concerning their duplicity, Barrow observes:—"As a direct refusal to any request

would betray a want of good breeding, every proposal finds their immediate acquiescence: they promise without hesitation, but generally disappoint by the invention of some slight pretence or plausible objection: they have no proper sense of the obligations of truth."

The quiescence observable in the character of the Chinese is the natural result of their training. By the Confucian system, the nation is moulded in a certain form, and, from the highest to the lowest, they present the aspect of a peace-loving people. But this is more the outward show of the face than the inward feeling of the heart. Stern discipline may generally keep them in awe, and the mass may kiss the rod which smites them; but, under real or supposed injury, they are sometimes found to be very revengeful. Women have been known to destroy themselves, in order to bring down the vengeance of the government on the heads of those with whom they have quarrelled; and history records that the people have arisen *en masse* against a magistrate by whom they were oppressed.

The inordinate national pride, for which the Chinese are proverbial, seems to be the offspring of self-love and ignorance. Imagining that their country is the centre of a system, as the old astronomers deemed that the earth was to the universe, they have hence learned to look upon all other nations with contempt. And this natural disposition of the people has been artfully promoted by the government, considering that its interest was concerned in increasing the mutual dislike and disunion. Slandrous proclamations are frequently issued against foreigners at

Canton, and penalties of no slight nature are attached to a "traitorous intercourse" with Europeans. From these causes it is that, though the merchants are scrupulous in their commercial engagements, yet on all other points foreigners are considered "fair game."

Poverty is no reproach among the Chinese. Personal merit and age are in far higher esteem than mere wealth. Notwithstanding, poverty is a dreaded evil. It is greatly obviated by a system of clubbing together in families, which resembles the clanships of Scotch Highlanders. This system arises from a sacred regard to kindred, but it operates as a public provision for the relief of the poor, and serves as one of the best means for the distribution of wealth. At times, also, it exercises a salutary check on the measures of the arbitrary government; whence many attempts have been made to effect its dissolution. But the institution is too much interwoven with the whole being of the nation to be utterly overthrown. It has existed from the first ages of the history of China, and it will, doubtless, exist for ages yet to come, if not through all time. The ties of blood, and the love of their relations, among the Chinese are so strong, as to make them look with indifference on society at large; and they are strengthened by the doctrines of their philosophers. Confucius connived at injustice in favour of a relation; and Mencius rejected, with equal disdain, egotism and general philanthropy, while he taught that relations should possess the undivided love of relations.

The same feeling which the Chinese display towards relations is also displayed towards the

place of their birth. They have a popular saying, "If he who attains to honours or wealth never returns to his native place, he is like a finely-dressed person walking in the dark." Hence regard for the place of their birth clings to the Chinese through life; and they commonly apply, toward the end of their days, for leave to quit the honours and emoluments of office, and retire to their native village. Colonists, also, who venture abroad in search of gain, return home as soon as they have acquired a competency, though at the risk of being oppressed, under the forms of law, for leaving their native country.

It seems strange that a people so ardently attached to their families and their birth-place should be guilty of the crime of infanticide. Yet so it is. Barrow concludes, from observation, that four thousand infants are annually exposed to death in Peking alone. Some of the scenes he witnessed are almost incredible, when contrasted with the boasted civilization of the "celestial empire." About twenty-four infants, he says, half of whom may die a natural death, are cast out into the streets every night, and dogs and swine are let loose to devour them. Those who remain undevoured are picked up, and carried in carts to a common pit without the city walls, in which the living and the dead are thrown together. The most prevalent mode of effecting the death of infants is by suffocation; and this is said to be frequently done to the aged and afflicted, to "cut the brittle thread of life." So truly has it been observed by the psalmist, that

"The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty."
Psa. lxxiv. 20.

Infanticide is exclusively limited to the female sex, and it may be looked upon as a proof of the degradation of females in China. On the treatment of women, the Indo-Chinese Gleaner remarks:—"The very dependent and degraded state of females in China is everywhere observable. They are not allowed the confidence of their husbands, nor to sit at table with them, nor to have a voice in domestic concerns, nor to visit the temples where the prayers of the unfortunate are supposed to find access. Religion is denied them. Little attention seems to be paid to the peculiar circumstances in which, as wives and mothers, they may be placed. 'Rise, run, work, eat little, spend little, be silent, keep out of sight, obey, bear; and rather bleed, starve, and die, than dare to complain,' is the genuine language of the rules laid down for their treatment. Fortunately for them, humanity, common sense, and interest, in many cases, plead in their favour, and procure a relaxation of the rigour of ethical and legislative restrictions; yet where such restrictions have the sanction both of public opinion and of supreme authority, how is it possible to prevent their hurtful operation on this tender half of human nature?"

In the life of females in China, up to the period of their marriage, there are but few shades. One of the most remarkable practices, and especially in the higher classes, is, the mutilation of their feet, which is produced by cramping them in early childhood. This is said to arise from Chinese notions of gentility, in the same manner as it is the fashion among the men to wear long nails, to convey an idea of exemption from labour.

Probably, however, the custom was first imposed by the tyranny of the men, who wished to disable them from "gadding abroad;" and as custom is held sacred, it is hence perpetuated. The Chinese affect to admire the helplessness induced by this mutilation, notwithstanding its usual concomitant of sickness. Their tottering gait, as they hobble along upon the heel of the foot, is compared to the waving of a willow, agitated by a breeze! But the foot of a female in China is not the only part of the being cramped by the tyranny of law and custom. The mind suffers a greater and an irreparable injury. The great subject of education, among the higher classes, is implicit obedience, to which is added a *little* reading and writing; while the humbler classes are only taught weaving, sewing, embroidery, and the drudgery of household and field work. Some ladies, however, are instructed in embroidering, as well as painting on silk, and music. They are not often versed in letters; but instances are sometimes quoted, of those who have been skilled in composing verses.

In marriage, the females of China receive a deep and lasting injury. A union prompted solely by love is unknown in that country. Such would, indeed, be considered a monstrous infraction of the duty of filial obedience, and a crime heinous as infidelity. In this momentous concern, therefore, they are compelled to submit to the will of their parents. Children are frequently betrothed to each other while yet infants; and those who are not, are given to men of whom they know nothing, and whose faces they have never seen. Such unions as the latter are contracted by a

“go-between,” who repairs to the parents of the female, and offers terms. When the bargain is concluded, which is generally influenced by the personal attractions of the lady—determined by the smallness of her feet, her pale complexion, and slender waist—the stipulated sum is paid, and a day appointed for the wedding, which takes place amidst the sound of mirth and music.



CHINESE LADIES.

On her marriage the lady assumes her husband's surname. But these forced marriages often produce the most tragical results. Suicides frequently take place among the women of China; and they frequently attempt to poison those by whom their earthly happiness is destroyed.

One leading cause of the unhappiness of the marriage life in China appears to arise from the custom allowed by law, for a man to maintain concubines under the same roof. Although these do not possess equal privileges with the wife, but are bought for money, and received into the house nearly like any other domestic, yet their children are admitted to the rights of natural offspring. Hence heart-burnings and jealousies, such as those which drove Hagar and her son into the arid desert, take possession of the breast of the legitimate wife, and these are frequently followed by madness and vengeance.

Divorce is common among the Chinese. They have borrowed the notion from the Budhists, that marriage goes by destiny. Early marriages are promoted by every motive of humanity. Their maxim on this subject is, that "there are three great acts of disregard to parents, and to die without a progeny is the *chief*." Hence the desire for children among the Chinese, which is scarcely less ardent than that which existed among the Hebrews. Hence, also, the birth of a son is an occasion of great rejoicing. Parents and friends alike join in celebrating the event, as one of the happiest which could fall to their lot. The father especially rejoices, and that not simply because his name will be perpetuated, but because he will have a helper during life, and one to perform his funeral rites when dead at the family tomb.

There is no duty among the Chinese so scrupulously performed as that which relates to the tombs of their ancestors. They conceive that any neglect of this duty is sure to be succeeded

by worldly misfortune, and the performance of it takes the character of a "religious sense."

"When a parent or elder relative among the Chinese dies," says Davis, "the event is announced to all the branches of the family: each side of the doors is distinguished by labels in white, which is the mourning colour. The lineal descendants of the deceased, clothed in coarse white cloth, with bandages of the same round their heads, sit, weeping, near the corpse, on the ground; the women keeping up a dismal howl, after the manner of the Irish. In the mean time the friends of the deceased appear, with white coverlids of linen or silk, which are placed on the body; the eldest son, or next lineal male descendant, supported on each side by relations, and bearing in his hands a porcelain bowl containing two copper coins, now proceeds to the river, or the nearest well, or the wet ditch of the city, to buy water, as it is termed. The ceremony must be performed by the eldest son's son, in preference to the second son; and this entitles him to a double share of the property, which in other respects is divided equally among the sons. The form of washing the face and body with this water being completed, the deceased is dressed as in life, and laid in a coffin, of which the planks are from four to six inches in thickness, and the bottom strewed with quick lime. On being closed, it is made air-tight by cement, being, besides, varnished on the inside and outside. A tablet is then placed on it, inscribed with the name and titles of the deceased, as they are afterwards to be cut upon his tomb.

"On the expiration of thrice seven, or twenty-one days, the funeral procession takes place; the

tablet being conveyed in a gilded sedan, or pavilion, with incense and offerings before it. It is accompanied by music, closely resembling the Scottish bagpipe, with the continual repetition of three successive strokes on a sort of drum. The children and relations of both sexes follow, in white, without much order or regularity; and, upon reaching the grave, the ceremonies and oblations commence. It being a part of their superstition that money and garments must be burned for the use of the deceased in the world of spirits, these are, with a wise economy, represented by paper. The form of the tomb, whether large or small, is that of a Greek Ω , which, if taken in the sense of 'the end,' is a singular coincidence. Those of the wealthy and noble are sometimes very large, and contain a considerable quantity of masonry, with figures of animals in stone. The whole detail of sepulchral rites, with the sentiments of the Chinese concerning the dead, are contained in the drama of 'An Heir in Old Age.'

"After the interment, the tablet of the deceased is brought back in procession; and if the family be rich, it is placed in the hall of ancestors; if poor, in some part of the house, with incense before it. Twice in every year, in the spring and autumn, are the periods fixed for performing the rites to the dead; but the first is the principal period, and the only one commonly attended to. Unlike the generality of the Chinese festivals, which are regulated by the moon, this is determined by the sun, and occurs annually, one hundred and five days after the winter solstice, that is, on the 5th of April. About that time the whole population of the town is seen trooping

out in parties to the hills, to repair and sweep the tombs, and make offerings; leaving behind them, on their return home, long streamers of red and white paper, to mark the fulfilment of the rites. Whole ranges of hills, sprinkled with tombs, may at that season be seen covered with these testimonials of attention to the departed, fluttering in the wind and sunshine."

The graves and monuments of the Chinese are uniformly situated upon the hill sides. Their reasons for this appear to be threefold: first, that they are unfit for cultivation; secondly, that, as they are well exposed to the winds, every kind of noxious exhalation is soon dispersed; and thirdly, that they are associated in their minds with the pleasing appearances and fructifying effects of the atmosphere, as well as with curious legend and captivating story. To the hills, therefore, the dead, whether rich or poor, are brought and buried; and hither affectionate mothers, forlorn widows, and dutiful sons, resort to mourn the loss of the departed. Frequently a temporary habitation is erected by the side of the grave, to shelter them from the inclement skies, while they eat "the bread of mourners," and the "sorrowful meat," and take their "fill of tears." They sorrow as those without hope. Wrapped in the coarsest cloth, they forego the custom of personal attention, and sometimes show an extraordinary example of patience and self-mortification. But this is not common. The majority adhere to the rules established by etiquette, as to the time which mourners ought to spend at the grave of the deceased.

The period of mourning prescribed by the ritual is three years for a parent. This, however, is com-

monly reduced in practice to thrice nine, or twenty-seven months. The full period of three years must elapse before children can marry subsequent to the death of their parents. On the death of the emperor, the same observances are kept by his millions of subjects as on the death of the parent of each individual. The whole empire remains unshaven for the space of one hundred days, while the period of mourning apparently lasts longer; and all officers of government take the ball and crimson silk from their caps, thereby laying aside the insignia of rank.

The regard which the Chinese exhibit towards their deceased relatives would form a pleasing trait in their character, if it stopped at the point of their mourning. Unfortunately, however, it degenerates into idolatry: their fond imaginations exalt a poor miserable worm to heaven, and enrol him among the gods! To their dead they offer the meat and the drink offering, as unto the Deity!

The festival for the dead among the Chinese is a public celebration. Large mat-houses are erected on the hills, ornamented with lanterns and chandeliers, in which are placed images of the infernal deities, including *Yen-wang*, who may be reckoned the Pluto of the Chinese. Priests of the Budhu sect are employed on this occasion, who chant masses for the dead, present offerings of food, and burn large quantities of paper representing clothes, habitations, etc., in order that they may pass into the other world for the use of the departed. But these celebrations, being calculated to bring large numbers together, appear to consist, in a great measure, of feasting and entertainment. While they remember the

dead, and exalt them, they are not unmindful of their own enjoyments: this festival, therefore, may be considered to have dwindled into mere ceremony. The Chinese offer all kinds of food, candles, flowers, and incense, in rich abundance, at the graves of their ancestors, but they do not scruple to make use of them themselves. There seems no question, however, that they are sincere in offering their oblations to the dead, nor can it be doubted that the ceremony is idolatrous.

The Chinese appear to be led into this exhibition of idolatrous regard for the dead, by the instinctive horror which they have of death. Gutzlaff remarks:—"Nothing is viewed by the Chinese with so much horror as death. Their hopes do not extend beyond the grave, and the future state is to them the wretched condition of hungry ghosts, whose hankering desires after the good things of this world are left unsatisfied. Often have we witnessed the last agony, when the soul was about to take her flight. It is a fearful struggle, unallayed by the pleasing prospect of eternity, heightened by the terror of a sudden removal into the hideous hades. Hence the mourning and wailing at the death of friends, and the painful, unsatisfying efforts of survivors, by splendid funeral rites and sepulchral gifts, to soothe their own sorrows, and to render the state of the dead at least in some degree tolerable. Confucius inculcates burial and mourning rites as the most important of all duties; and, to excite veneration towards the dead, he inculcates their idolatrous worship. Mencius observes that political economy consists in providing food for the living, and the means of fit burial for the dead."

This feature in the Chinese character affords an awful theme for contemplation. More than three hundred millions of human beings, born to exist throughout the countless ages of eternity, living without hope, and dying in despair! Struggling in the midst of darkness, they seek by vain rites and ceremonies, by tears and wailing, to redeem the soul from misery. How tremendous is the consideration—hundreds of millions are perishing for lack of knowledge!

Shall the Chinese, then, be overlooked by Christian sympathy? Surely none whose heart is not adamant can gaze upon them without emotion, and without desiring their conversion. Feeling, however, is not enough; Christian emotion and zealous desires must be followed by active and persevering efforts to make known that gospel which is “the power of God to salvation unto every one that believeth.”

CEREMONIAL USAGES.

The Chinese attach great importance to ceremony. This might be supposed to produce a constrained stiffness and formality of manner; but the reverse is the fact. Persons high in station are distinguished generally in their address by a dignified simplicity and ease. This does not, however, prevent their laying great stress on precedence; and on public occasions, when the spectators are numerous, this is especially manifest. In the case of foreign embassies, particularly, they always strive to maintain their superiority over their guests by placing themselves before them, which is directly contrary to the true principles of politeness.

This behaviour towards foreigners becomes more marked when contrasted with their general rule in domestic visits, which is to contend for the lowest seat. "When any one," says Mr. Davis, "proceeds in his chair to pay a visit, his attendants present his ticket at the gate, consisting of his name and titles written down the middle of a folded sheet of red paper ornamented with gold leaf; and there is sometimes enough paper in these, when opened out like a screen, to extend across a room. If the visitor is in mourning, his ticket is white, with blue letters. According to the relative rank of the parties, the person visited comes out a greater or less distance to receive his guest; and when they meet, their genuflexions, and endeavours to prevent the same, are also according to rule. These matters are all so well understood by those who are bred up to them, that they occasion no embarrassment whatever to the Chinese. The ordinary salutation among equals is to join the closed hands, and lift them two or three times towards the head, saying, *Haou? tsing, tsing!* that is, 'Are you well? hail, hail!'

"Soon after being seated, the attendants invariably enter with porcelain cups, furnished with covers, in each of which, on removing the little saucer by which it is surmounted, appears a small quantity of fine tea-leaves, on which boiling water has been poured; and thus it is that they drink the infusion, without the addition of either sugar or milk. The delicate aroma of fine tea is no doubt more enjoyed, in this mode of taking it; and a little habit leads many Europeans in China to relish the custom. Though the infusion is

generally made in the cup, they occasionally use antique and tastefully shaped tea-pots, which are not unfrequently made of tutenague externally, covering earthenware on the inside. At visits, a circular japanned tray is frequently brought in, having numerous compartments, radiating from the centre, in which are a variety of sweetmeats, or dried fruits. These are taken up with a small two-pronged fork of silver. On the conclusion of a visit, the host conducts his guest, if he wishes to do him high honour, even to his sedan, and there remains, until he is carried off; but on ordinary occasions, it is deemed sufficient to go as far as the top of the stone steps, if there are any, or merely to the door of the apartment."

Mandarins and official persons are carried in their sedans by four bearers; they are likewise accompanied by a train of attendants, who are marshalled in two files before the chair. Two of these carry gongs, on which they strike at regular intervals; two others carry chains, which they jingle in concert; and two more are armed with the bamboo, or bastinado. Others there are, who utter a long-drawn shout at intervals, to denote the approach of the great man; while the cortege is made up of servants and other followers, some of whom carry red umbrellas of dignity; and others, large red boards, on which the titles of the officer are inscribed. The populace who meet this procession, are compelled to stand aside, with the arms hanging close to their sides, and their eyes on the ground. A departure from this custom would ensure them an infliction of the bastinado, without any ceremony.

The solemn feasts of the emperor, and the

private feasts and formal dinners among the Chinese, are conducted in a similar manner. The former have been thus described by an eyewitness, who was present at an entertainment given to the last English embassy :—"The ambassador informed the gentlemen of his suite that he was going to perform the same salutation of respect, before the yellow screen, that he was accustomed to make to the vacant throne of his sovereign in the House of Lords. We were directed to keep our eyes on him, and do exactly as he did. A low, solemn hymn, of not unpleasant melody, now commenced ; and, at the voice of a crier, the two imperial legates fell prostrate three times, and each time thrice struck the floor with their foreheads ; a cranio-verberative sound being audible, amidst the deep silence which prevailed around. The ambassador and his suite, standing up in the mean while, made nine profound bows.

"When the ceremony was over, the feast was brought in, and the theatrical entertainments commenced. The legates sat to the left, on an elevation of one step ; and the ambassador and two commissioners on the same elevation to the right. The other Chinese grandees sat on the left, a little below the legates ; and the gentlemen of the embassy to the right, below his lordship and the commissioners. The two lines thus faced each other down the room.

"As no chairs can be used where the emperor is present, or supposed to be so, the whole party sat cross-legged on cushions ; but the mandarins, being accustomed to the posture, of course had the advantage. The tables were low in propor-

tion ; and when we were all seated, a number of attendants placed on each table, holding only two guests, a large tray which fitted it, and contained a complete course, of which four in all were served. The first consisted of a rich soup ; the second, of sixteen round and narrow dishes, containing salted meats and other relishes ; the third, of eighteen basins of birds'-nests, sharks'-fins, deer-sinews, and other viands, supposed to be highly nourishing ; the fourth, of twelve bowls of stews, immersed in a rich soup. The guests helped themselves with chopsticks, small spoons of porcelain, fashioned like a child's pap-boat, and four-pronged forks of silver, small and straight ; and when they drank to each other, the warm wine was poured into little cups by the attendants, who at the same time bent on one knee.

"At the other end of the hall, where we sat, so as to be viewed by each person from his place, down the two ranges of tables, proceeded the stage performances. The music was wretched, and the occasional crash of gongs abominable. Some pyrotechnic monsters, breathing fire and smoke, were among the *dramatis personæ* ; but the best part of the scene was the tumbling, really superior in its kind. The strength and activity of one man were particularly eminent."

At their great entertainments, the Chinese have a number of courses, beginning with those more digestible, and ending with rice and stews. They are noted gourmands, and their feasts often last several hours, whilst tea and liquors are served up in the intervals of the repast. If the party consists of the literati, they amuse themselves with riddles, after the manner of the an-

cient oriental and classical nations, and with reciting poems and satirical verse. Amongst the lower classes, games of chance, consisting of throwing out some fingers, and letting the other party guess the number, similar to the Italian *mora*, are very common. At all times the Chinese are a cheerful people, but at their feasts they are jovial; they then talk and laugh incessantly, seeking to drown care in present enjoyment. At such seasons they may be likened to the ancient Epicureans, whose maxim was, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Their feasting, indeed, which begins in ceremony, generally ends in revelry and drunkenness.

The great staff of life in China is rice, which is either eaten dry, or mixed with water, so as to resemble a soup. Out of rice they make their chief intoxicating liquor, which, when good, is something like strong whisky, both in its colourless appearance and its smoky flavour. Other vegetables are consumed, such as the sweet potato, Barbadoes millet, peas, beans, turnips, carrots, etc. Of their fruits, the orange, lichen, loquats, and mangoes are much in use, and of a very exquisite flavour. Their favourite animal food is pork, the taste for which is national and peculiar. There is a maxim prevalent among them, that "a scholar does not quit his books, nor a poor man his pigs." The pig is, in truth, universally reared about cottages, and its flesh is by far the commonest meat. The flesh of the bullock, sheep, deer, dog, cat, and horse is eaten; but, compared with that of swine, it is a rarity. Fish are eaten in great abundance, either fresh, dried, or salted; and they rear great quan-

tities of ducks, and various species of fowl, for the table. The comprehensive principle on which Chinese diet is regulated, is, to eat every thing which can possibly give nourishment. But the greatest dainties consumed by the Chinese are brought from foreign countries. Among these, the edible bird's-nest, and the bicho-de-mer, or sea-slug, of which there are various kinds, occupy the first rank. Shark-fins, fish-maws, cow-sinews, and the points of stag-antlers, buffalo-hides, etc., are considered great dainties, on account of their gelatinous qualities. These are boiled down to a jelly, and eaten with a little seasoning.

The edible bird's-nest, so grateful to the Chinese palate, has been thus described by Earl in his voyages:—"The manufacturers of the nests are small swallows, which are supposed to collect the glutinous substance of which they are composed from the sea. The nests resemble small tea-saucers in form, the rim being about the size of that of a tumbler. The best, that is, those collected before the eggs of the bird have been laid, are of a light red colour and nearly transparent, bearing almost a perfect resemblance to isinglass, except that they are rather more brittle. China is almost the only market for this delicacy, the nests being greatly in demand throughout the celestial empire, in consequence of their supposed nutritious qualities. They are of three different degrees of excellence, and the best kind is sold in China at nine shillings the ounce. When used for culinary purposes, they are dissolved in water, and made into a tasteless soup. I have eaten them several times at the

tables of rich Chinese, but they were not at all agreeable to the palate."

Cookery among the Chinese is more like the French than the English. Their dishes are usually *made*, and vegetables are introduced into every preparation of meat. Generally speaking, their dishes are very palatable; but there are some which they esteem as delicacies, which would have few attractions for a European. Among these are the dishes made of the larvæ of the sphinx moth, and of a grub bred in the sugar-cane, which are much relished in China. Some of the articles eaten by the poor are truly disgusting; they refuse nothing; even rats, mice, and every kind of vermin are consumed without repugnance. It is probable, however, that poverty induces this habit, for the Chinese are by no means an unclean people in their diet. Travellers, indeed, give them the credit of being, in general, scrupulously nice in their food. Gutzlaff says, they are very clean in preparing it, and that they prefer high-seasoned dishes, salt meats, and vegetables, to all other viands.

AMUSEMENTS.

The Chinese, living in uninterrupted peace, and bearing no part in public transactions, relieve the dull monotony of their lives by games at once frivolous and puerile. This contrariety in the national character of the Chinese compared with that of Europeans, as well as other customs, has been thus noticed in a work printed at Macao:—"On inquiring of the boatman in which direction Macao lay, I was answered, in the west-

north, the wind, as I was informed, being east-south. We do not say so in Europe, thought I; but imagine my surprise when, in explaining the utility of the compass, the boatman added, that the needle pointed to the south! Desirous to change the subject, I remarked, that I concluded he was about to proceed to some high festival, or merry-making, as his dress was completely white. He told me, with a look of much dejection, that his only brother had died the week before, and that he was in the deepest mourning for him. On my landing, the first object that attracted my attention was a military mandarin, who wore an embroidered petticoat, with a string of beads round his neck, and who besides carried a fan; and it was with some dismay I observed him mount on the right side of his horse. I was surrounded by natives, all of whom had the hair shaven from the forepart of the head, while a portion of them permitted it to grow on their faces. On my way to the house prepared for my reception, I saw two Chinese boys discussing with much earnestness who should be the possessor of an orange. They debated the point with much gesture, and at length, without venturing a combat, sat down and divided the orange equally between them. At that moment my attention was drawn by several old Chinese, some of whom had grey beards, and nearly all of them wearing huge goggling spectacles. A few were chirruping and chuckling to singing birds, which they carried in bamboo cages, or perched on a stick; others were catching flies to feed the birds; and the remainder of the party seemed to be delightfully employed in flying paper kites; while a

group of boys were gravely looking on, and regarding these innocent occupations of their seniors with the most serious and gratified attention."

One of the few athletic diversions of the Chinese takes place on the occasion of a public festival, held on the fifth day of the fifth moon, which usually occurs in June. Long narrow boats, built for the purpose, and manned by from forty to eighty men with paddles, meet in the rivers of China, and race against each other with great heat and emulation. They row to the sound of the gong, and the paddles keep time to its beat. In their contests accidents frequently occur from the upsetting of the boats, which, from their great length, are called "dragon boats."

Another public entertainment is given in the feast of lanterns. This takes place on the first full moon of the new year, and it is a display of ingenuity and taste in the construction and mechanism of a variety of lanterns made of silk, varnish, horn, paper, and glass; some of which are supplied with moving figures, of men galloping on horseback, fighting, or performing various feats, together with representations of birds, beasts, and other living creatures, all in full motion. The moving principle in these is formed by a horizontal wheel, turned by the draft of air created by the heat of the lamp, and the circular motion is communicated in various directions by fine threads attached to moving figures.

The Chinese are celebrated for their fire-works. Some of these are ingenious and entertaining, on account of the variety of moving figures which they exhibit. Such are the "drum," which is a cylindrical case, containing a multitude of figures

so contrived as to drop in succession on strings, and remain suspended in motion during the explosion of fire-works contained within the cylinder; and their figures of boats, which are constructed so as to float upon the water by means of a stream of fire issuing from the stern. The brilliancy and skill of the pyrotechny displayed in these contrivances, however, are inferior to those exhibited in European fire-works, and their rockets are of very indifferent manufacture.

Dramatic entertainments are frequently given at public feasts, for which purpose some of the Chinese officers of state have private theatres in their houses. Scenery seems to be altogether dispensed with; on which Barrow observes:—“The want of scenery is sometimes supplied by a very unclassical figure, which, just the reverse of the personifications of grammarians, considers persons to represent things. If, for instance, a walled city is to be stormed, a parcel of soldiers, piling themselves on a heap across the stage, are supposed to represent the wall over which the storming party is to scramble.” The same writer, after having described the frivolous nature of the Chinese drama, adds, of their general diversions, in continuation:—“In short, the greater part of the amusements of the Chinese are at the present day of a nature so puerile, or so gross and vulgar, that the tricks and the puppet-shows, which are exhibited in a common fair of one of the country towns of England, may be considered as comparatively polished, interesting, and rational. In sleight of hand, in posture-making, rope-dancing, riding, and athletic exercises, they are much inferior to Europeans; but in the variety of their

fire-works, they perhaps may carry the palm against the whole world. In every other respect the amusements of the Chinese appear to be of a low and trifling nature, neither suited to the affected gravity of the government, nor to the generally supposed state of civilization among the people."

Conjuring, sleight of hand, and other species of dexterity, form the in-door amusements of the Chinese. These are invariably practised at feasts, if theatrical entertainments are not available. The mind left uninformed, thus seeks enjoyment in the most foolish amusements.

Among the out-door amusements of the Chinese is a species of shuttlecock played with the feet; the hand being allowed occasionally to assist in the game. Kite-flying is also universally practised, and in this the Chinese excel all other people, both in the various constructions of their kites, and the heights to which they make them rise. They are constructed of paper made of refuse silk, and split bamboo. They assume every possible shape, and sometimes it is impossible, when they have reached the highest point of ascent, to distinguish them from birds. When ascending, by means of round holes, supplied with vibrating cords, on which the current of the air acts, they issue a humming noise similar to the hum of a swarm of bees.

The nature of the amusements of the Chinese is the same generally, both in the palace and the cottage. Farces, tumbling, and fire-works are the usual diversions with which the emperor and his guests are regaled. In this respect, the Tartar dynasty has become much degenerated. In the

days of Kang-he and Kien-loong, hunting expeditions and falconry were in vogue, by which the hardy and warlike habits of the Mantchoos were maintained; but these are now laid aside. The only amusement, exhibiting the spirit of the Tartars, now practised by the emperor's court, is skating. A scene of this description has been thus described by Van Braam, who was one of the Dutch mission which proceeded to the emperor's court, soon after Lord Macartney's embassy:—"The emperor made his appearance on a sort of sledge, supported by the figures of four dragons. This machine was moved about by several mandarins, some dragging before, and others pushing behind. The four principal ministers of state were also drawn upon the ice in their sledges by inferior mandarins. Whole troops of civil and military officers soon appeared, some on sledges, some on skates, and others playing at football on the ice, and he that picked up the ball was rewarded by the emperor. The ball was then hung up in a kind of arch, and several mandarins shot at it, in passing on skates, with their bows and arrows. Their skates were cut off short under the heel, and the fore part was turned up at right angles."

The Chinese have been justly characterized by Lay as devotees of mirth and pleasure. The more voluptuous among them hang a swinging cot up in their apartments, in which they idly pass their time away in singing. Generally speaking, the rich are averse to any bodily exertion, whether in business or amusement, which may be attributed to the great heat of the weather during a considerable portion of the year.

From this habit they become great sufferers, and they would be still greater were it not for the custom of living so much in the open air. Their love of ease and pleasure, combined with the defects of education, and their attachment to antiquated custom, debases their minds.

COSTUME, AND DOMESTIC MANNERS.

In Europe there is a never-ending change of costume: fashion is there so capricious, that what is worn to-day may be cast aside to-morrow as useless. It is not so with the Chinese. To them Morier's observations concerning oriental manners in other Asiatic countries, are equally applicable. "The manners of the east," says he, "amidst all the changes of government and religion, are still the same: they are living impressions from an original mould, and at every step some object, some idiom, some dress, or some custom of common life, reminds the traveller of ancient times." The same costume as was worn in the remotest ages, is worn at this day, unchanged either in shape or material, in almost all Asiatic nations; and this may solve the enigma, why it is that European manufactures have not hitherto found an extensive or even ready sale in the east, China included.

There is a marked distinction existing between the summer and winter dress of the Chinese, arising from the extremes of heat and cold which prevail throughout the country at opposite seasons of the year. This difference is principally marked by the cap. The summer cap is a cone of finely-woven filaments of bamboo, and surmounted, in persons of rank, by a red, blue,

white, or gilded ball at the point of the cone. From this ornamental ball, a bunch of crimson silk or red horse-hair descends all around over the cap, and sometimes a single pearl is worn in front. The winter cap fits close to the head, and has a brim of black velvet or fur, turned sharply up all round, and rising a little higher in front and behind than at the sides. The dome-shaped top is surmounted by the ball, like the summer cap, and from the point of its insertion a bunch of fine crimson silk descends, just covering the dome. The summer garment is a long loose gown of light silk, gauze, or linen, hanging free at ordinary times, but, on occasions of dress, gathered in round the middle by a silken girdle, which is fastened in front by a clasp. To this girdle are fastened a fan-case, tobacco-pouch, flint and steel for lighting the pipe, and sometimes a sheath with a small knife and a pair of chopsticks. In winter, over a longer dress of silk or crape, which reaches to the ankles, the Chinese wear a large-sleeved spencer, reaching down to the hips, and made either of fur, or silk, or broad-cloth, lined with skins. The neck, which in summer is left bare, is protected in winter with a collar of silk or fur. The nether garment is loose in summer, but in winter a pair of tight leggings are drawn on separately over all, and fastened up to the sides of the person, leaving the upper garment to hang out behind in a very unpleasant manner. Stockings of cotton or silk, woven, are worn at all seasons; and in winter persons of rank wear boots of cloth, satin, or velvet, with thick soles, which are kept clean

by whitening, instead of the European mode of blacking.

The dress of ceremony among the Chinese is very rich and handsome. The colour of the spencer is usually dark blue or purple, and the long dress beneath is of some lighter or gayer colour. On 'state occasions this long dress is embroidered with dragons, or other devices, wrought in silk and gold.

The Chinese have no "particular passion for clean linen." Their very body-garments are sometimes made of a species of light silk, and all the rest of their dress being of silk or furs, there is little demand for white calico or linen. Even sheets and table-cloths are unknown among them. The natural result of this want of cleanliness is, that the people are subject to cutaneous and leprous complaints. The latter may be increased, as some suppose, from their fondness for pork, and, perhaps, from the nature of the climate.

The dress of females is very modest and becoming, and, in the higher class, as splendid as it can be made with silks and embroidery. The ordinary dress is a large-sleeved robe of silk, or of cotton among the poorer sort, over a long garment, sometimes of a pink colour, under which are loose trousers, which are fastened round the ankle, just above the shoe. Unmarried women wear their hair in long tresses; but matrons wear it twisted up towards the back of the head, ornamented with flowers or jewels, and fastened with two bodkins stuck in crosswise. Sometimes they wear an ornament representing the *föong-*

hâng, or Chinese phoenix, composed of gold and jewels, the wings hovering, and the beak of the bird hanging over the forehead on an elastic spring. In such a costume the females in China would frequently appear handsome, were it not for the custom of daubing their faces with white and red paint, together with their mutilated feet. The young women have their eyebrows fashioned until they represent a fine curved line, which the Chinese compare to "the new moon," or to "the young leaflet of the willow."

The costume of the peasantry in China is adapted to give freedom to the body. In summer it consists of a pair of loose cotton trowsers tied round the middle, and a frock equally loose hanging over it. In very hot weather the trowsers only are worn. The head is defended from the sun by a broad umbrella-shaped hat, of bamboo slips interwoven, which is exchanged for the felt cap in winter. In rainy weather they have cloaks of a species of flags or reeds, from which the water runs as from a penthouse. Generally they wear no shoes, but sometimes they wear sandals made of straw.

It would seem that the party-coloured coat, with which Jacob clad his beloved Joseph, is an universal mark of regard in oriental countries. Such a coat is frequently given by the Chinese to a retiring public magistrate, whose government has been marked by moderation and justice. A deputation waits on him with a habit composed of every variety of colour, as if made by a general contribution from the people. With this habit he is solemnly invested, and it is

preserved with much care as a relic in his family for generations.

Notwithstanding the dress of the Chinese is defined by custom, and rendered sacred by antiquity, there is a vanity sometimes displayed in it which exhibits the natural pride of the human heart. There are fops among them, as among Europeans. But private character is more legibly displayed in their domestic manners than in their costumes; and here the defective principles of their religion and education are clearly unfolded: they have left them as mariners without a compass, exposed to the danger of making shipwreck of their happiness both in this world and the next.

Among the most fatal temptations to which the Chinese are exposed, and to which they most yield, may be reckoned the use of opium. On this subject Lay remarks:—"In China the spendthrift, the man of lewd habits, the drunkard, and a large assortment of bad characters, slide into the opium-smoker; hence the drug seems to be chargeable with all the vices of the country. Opium, doubtless, has its victims in persons who, but for its fascinating lures, might have escaped ruin; but in the great majority of instances it only adds one stain more to a character already polluted. . . . Many use it in moderation, and are sufficiently masters of themselves to keep on the right side of slavery; but it is a subtle and traitorous inmate, and no one who has once felt the exhilarating effects of it, is sure that he will not one day fall a prey to its delusions. This great metropolis has a choice of wretched and degraded

sights ; but nothing that I ever see reminds me of an opium-smoker. His lank and shrivelled limbs, tottering gait, sallow visage, feeble voice, and the death-boding glance of his eye, are so superlative in their degree, and so closely blended in their union, that they at once bespeak him to be the most forlorn creature that treads upon the ground. Such sights, however, are not very common, for the miserable beings generally hide themselves from public view ; so that, amidst many thousands of healthy and happy faces, we only see here and there one of these prodigies of evil habit. Too much leisure, more money than is required for the necessities of life, a guilty conscience, an unquiet mind, and bad company, are the promoters, if not the causes, of opium-smoking. Happy is that man who, when he has provided for the necessities of the body, has nothing to bestow upon its vices."

The fumes of this noxious drug are inhaled through a peculiarly constructed pipe, whilst the wretched victim reclines at his ease. In this position he soon falls asleep, and on awaking takes a cup of tea, and then resumes the process. When the habit is confirmed, the degraded wretch seems unable to leave it off ; his strength soon fails, and he becomes a walking shadow, with eyes vacant and staring, and his whole bodily frame deranged ; on his brows are stamped the mark of infamy, and he seldom reaches an advanced age. And such are the sufferings and misery which millions endure from the use of this foreign and fatal narcotic. The use of it has grown to an evil of enormous magnitude in China ; and the anxiety of the Chinese govern-

ment to abolish the illicit traffic in the poison is commendable, though hitherto unsuccessful. In the "Chinese Repository" there is an account of a series of paintings, by a Chinese artist, illustrating the progress of the opium-smoker: it is from health and affluence, to poverty, disease, and death.

The lower orders among the Chinese are prone to the vice of gambling. Dice, cards, and dominoes, are all known and used among them, though infamy is attached to the practice, and it is discountenanced by the severity of the law. The idle and dissolute meet in their public-houses, which are generally open sheds, and where they are afforded the means of both gambling and drinking to excess. These evil habits are more especially observable among the sea-faring inhabitants of Canton and Fokien. The dangerous profession of these poor people, and their unsettled, wandering habits, tend to give them the reckless and improvident character attached to the lower grades of the maritime population in every part of the world. So degraded are these people by their habits, that it gives their superiors advantage over them. They become the frequent victims of cruelty and oppression, and none dare complain. Their dead bodies are sometimes seen floating down the river; and the living, fearing the infliction of the bastinado by their overseers, see them pass onward without a sigh of regard. Yet, in the midst of oppression and wrong, they are apparently light-hearted. To lighten their labour, and assist them in keeping time with the strokes of their oars, the boatmen often have recourse to a rude air, which is generally sung by

the master, the whole of the crew joining in the chorus. "On many a calm, still evening," says Baifrow, "when a dead silence reigned upon the water, have we listened with pleasure to this artless and unpolished air, which was sung, with little alteration, through the whole fleet."

In common with the nation in general, the maritime population of China are prone to superstition. Although the dragon is generally held in honour, yet on some occasions he is treated with great rudeness. This is especially the case on the fifth day of the fifth month, when he is supposed to lurk in ambush in some of the caves, with the fell intention of drowning some unlucky crew, and sinking their boat. To prevent him, the dragon-boat performs its fantastic feats about the river immediately in the vicinity of Canton, and noise and menace prevail as it is urged along by the rowers. This is deemed sufficient to scare him from his purpose.

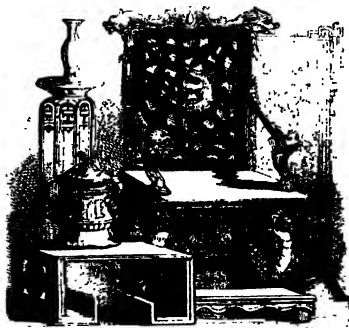
Another occasion, when the dragon is treated disrespectfully, is during an eclipse, when he is supposed to be making an essay to swallow the sun or the moon, to gratify his hunger. To frighten him from this act, or to entice him to quit his grasp, gongs are beaten incessantly while this phenomenon lasts. Yet the same people hold processions to his honour on the same river. "On the evening of March 10, 1838," says Lay, "as I was returning from a walk to the barrier, I observed that the drums were more noisy than usual near the village of Mongha, while sudden gleams of light were seen from between the trees and tufts of bamboo. After a short time, a long train of lights, differing in volume and brilliancy, was

seen, and soon presented to view transparent images of fish and other living things, which were made of paper, and lighted within. Among them, an enormous dragon was borne by a row of men, who moved about in fantastic evolutions, to represent the writhings and contortions of the ugly beast. As it was illuminated like the rest, the horned head, large eyes, and wide-yawning jaws, glared fiercely upon the crowd, as the men who bore that part capered and sidled about to give a characteristic effect to it. The fish were very large, and exceedingly well executed; for the Chinese show a taste for natural beauty sometimes, and are peculiarly happy in their paper imitations of the 'finny drove.'

"The drum is indispensable in every procession of any importance; and as the Chinese have not adopted the plan of making it light enough to be slung from the neck, they are obliged to place it in a kind of stand or frame, which is carried by several men, while the drummer follows his instrument on foot. In the head or prow of this litter was placed the little drum, the sharp clicking sound of which was intended as a treble to the large drum. A gong was suspended upon a post near the little drum; while a fourth musician made a most obstreperous din with a large pair of cymbals. The man who beat the little drum seemed to find an extraordinary delight in his occupation; while the swain with the cymbals held them close to the ear of the drummer, as if he meant to requite him for his diligence with a flood of sonorous vibrations poured fresh into his ear.

"Among the illuminated fishes, lanterns were carried, of various forms, but generally shaped

like a Chinese house, with a succession of stories, each story running out conspicuously into a revolute cornice or eaves. A flag was borne before, with a dragon painted upon it, followed by two large maces, of a square shape, and divided into several tiers, with a light in each of them. But the most engaging part of the spectacle consisted of two litters, brilliantly illuminated, and borne aloft in the air; in each of which were two little girls, with lovely features, and very gay attire. One of the twain stood upon a large pair of embroidered shoes, like those worn by Tartar ladies, out of compliment to the nation that governs China; the other little girl was reared upon a branch of the peach-tree in full flower, which, among the Chinese, is accounted the emblem of beauty and loveliness."



ARTICLES OF FURNITURE.

CHAPTER XI.

PROTESTANT MISSIONS.



TRACT DISTRIBUTION AMONG THE CHINESE.

EARLY in the nineteenth century Protestants of various denominations were aroused to feel the claims of the pagan world, and missions were commenced in various parts of the earth, and among them China received the heralds of salvation.

The honour of sending the first Protestant missionary to China belongs to the London Missionary Society. Having resolved upon this good, great, and glorious work, that society sought for men in whose prudence they could confide, and whose talents were adapted for that station. The

first person nominated was the late zealous and highly-gifted Dr. Morrison. Having directed his attention to various branches of science, which it was hoped might prove subservient to the cause of the gospel, and gained an imperfect insight into the Chinese language, that first herald of salvation to the pagans of China set sail for Canton at the commencement of 1807.

On reaching Canton, Dr. Morrison studied the language with unwearied assiduity, although surrounded with discouragements. His labours were in truth obliged to be carried on in secret, lest the government hearing of them, should be induced to direct his dismissal from the country. Even the persons who assisted him, trembled lest they should be discovered. But under the protecting care of the Almighty, who has purposes of mercy toward that benighted land, he laboured in security, and his efforts were crowned with success. In a few years, he translated and printed in the Chinese language, first the Acts of the Apostles, then the Gospel by Luke, next the morning and evening prayers of the Common Prayer book, together with the Psalter, divided for the days of the month, and finally, he completed the translation of the whole inspired book of God.

The translation of the sacred Scriptures into the Chinese language was completed in 1819, and on this occasion, the translator thus expressed his feelings:—"To have Moses, David, and the prophets, Jesus Christ, and his disciples, using their own words, and thereby declaring to the inhabitants of this land the wonderful works of God, indicates, I hope, the speedy introduction

of a happier era in these parts of the world; and I trust, that the gloomy darkness of pagan scepticism will be dispelled by the day-spring from on high; and that the gilded idols of Budha, and the numberless images which fill this land, will one day assuredly fall to the ground before the power of God's word, as the idol Dagon fell before the ark.

“These are my anticipations, although there appears not the least opening at present. A bitter aversion to the name of our blessed Saviour, and to any book that contains his name or his doctrines, is felt and cherished. This, however, does not induce us to despair. I remember Britain; what she was, and what she now is, in respect to religion. Three hundred years have not elapsed since national authority said that ‘the Bible should not be read openly in any church by the people, nor privately by the poor; that only noblemen and gentlemen, and noble ladies and gentlewomen might have the Bible in their houses.’ I remember this, and cherish hope for China.”

The labours of Dr. Morrison were not confined solely to the important task of translating the word of God into the Chinese language. In the midst of these he compiled a Chinese grammar, and commenced the compilation of a Chinese and English dictionary. This latter great work he completed in 1823, and by it he has prepared the way, not only for the attainment of a knowledge of the language of China, but for the future dissemination of European learning and science, and of the great truths of Christianity, in that pagan country. The completion of his dictionary, indeed, as well as that of the Chinese version of

the Bible, forms an epoch in the history of the Chinese missions.

While thus employed, Dr. Morrison was mindful of the souls of those with whom he had an opportunity of conversing. Privately he laboured diligently to diffuse a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. Years rolled away, however, before he was permitted to reap any fruit from his labours. Until 1814, no individual had resolution to seek admission, by baptism, into the church of Christ. At that time, a Chinese named Tsac-a-ko, after much instruction, and strict examination, came forward and confessed his faith in Christ, and was baptized. "At a spring of water," says this devoted servant of God, "issuing from the foot of a lofty hill by the sea-side, away from human observation, I baptized, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Tsac-a-ko. Oh that the Lord may cleanse him from all sin in the blood of Jesus, and purify his heart by the influences of the Holy Spirit! May he be the firstfruits of a great harvest—one of millions who shall believe, and be saved from the wrath to come!" Tsac-a-ko adhered to the faith until his death, which occurred in 1818.

In 1823, Dr. Morrison visited his native country, where he was received with the honour justly due to his talents and Christian philanthropy. Previous to his leaving Macao, he dedicated a native convert, named Leang Afa, to the work of an evangelist among his own countrymen. Dr. Morrison remained in England till 1826, when he returned to Macao. On his arrival, he met Leang Afa, who had been actively and usefully employed during his absence. Fear-

less of persecution, he had been ardent in his study of the sacred Scriptures, which he boldly promulgated by conversation, preaching, and the distribution of tracts and the book of God itself.

Bibles and tracts were the chief means now used by Dr. Morrison to promote the eternal welfare of the Chinese. In this work he was aided by the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the Religious Tract Society, both of which responded to his call to stand forward, "to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." Nor were his labours in vain. In October, 1832, he writes:—"I have been twenty-five years in China, and am now beginning to see the work prosper. Blessed be God for his mercy to me. By the press we have been enabled to scatter knowledge far and wide. We now greatly want writers in Chinese. My strength fails me much. The Confucian atheists, who believe that death is annihilation, are numerous. Of late, some merchants here, of that school, have been put into possession of the Testament, Milne on the Soul, and other books printed by us. Agong (another Chinese convert) has been occupied in my house all the summer, in printing sheet-tracts at the lithographic press. Leang Afa has been engaged in printing nine tracts, for which the Tract Society sent out funds. He has baptized three persons during the year."

By the means of English presses, which were introduced by this first Protestant mission, Dr. Morrison and his Chinese coadjutors, Leang Afa and Agong, were furnished with many thousand tracts, which they distributed among the people. On one occasion, the native converts itinerated

about 250 miles into the interior, for the purpose of distributing religious tracts among them, and on another they distributed more than 2500 in the streets of Canton, and among 24,000 literary graduates who had assembled in that city for public examination. They were received with gladness, and the effects may have been great.

The press, therefore, that mighty engine for good or evil, had become the chief instrument in the hands of Dr. Morrison for diffusing the knowledge of Christ. He saw and confessed its power, and wisely used it in the service of the Redeemer. But he was not limited to the press alone. Every sabbath he conducted Divine worship in his own house, and in the Chinese language. To his work he continued "faithful unto death;" which took place on the 1st of August, 1834. On that day, he rested from his labours, and entered into the blessedness of the dead who die in the Lord.

Having thus briefly sketched Dr. Morrison's history, we shall now notice his esteemed colleague, Mr., afterwards Dr. Milne. After passing through a course of preparatory instruction, he set sail for Macao, where he arrived in 1813. On his arrival, he commenced the study of the Chinese language; but on the second or third day after he began, he received an order from the Portuguese governor to leave the island in eight days, which was almost immediately followed by another, to go on board a vessel then about to leave the port. Remonstrance was in vain. Influenced by the Romanists, who were alarmed at the arrival of a Protestant missionary, the governor insisted on his departure, and he proceeded to Canton. Subsequently, he made a tour, circulating New

Testaments, tracts, and catechisms, through the chief settlements of the Malay Archipelago. On returning to Canton, the jealousy of the Chinese government rendered it imprudent for him to remain, and it was determined, that he should proceed to Malacca, a town in southern Asia, situated on the western coast of the Malay Peninsula, between the Gulf of Bengal and the Indian Archipelago and China. The bulk of the population of this town consists of Malays, but there are some Hindoos and Chinese, as well as some descendants of the Portuguese and Dutch. Among this mixed population, Dr. Milne laboured till his death, which took place in 1822.

Before his death, Dr. Milne had the satisfaction of seeing an Anglo-Chinese college erected, for the instruction of Chinese youths, from which much good has resulted. This mission has, indeed, recently assumed a very favourable appearance. Several instances of conversion have occurred among the Chinese population, and the converts have greatly aided the successors of Dr. Milne. There are now nearly thirty Christians at Malacca, possessing considerable knowledge of Scripture, and ready to go forth at once to preach the glad tidings of salvation to their fellow-countrymen.

While stationed at Malacca, Dr. Milne visited Pulo Penang, or Prince of Wales's Island, which is the seat of government of the British possessions in the Straits of Malacca. This island is inhabited by a mixed population of Europeans, Armenians, Malays, Achinese, Battas, Chinese, Chuliahs, Bengalese, Burmans, Siamese, Arabs, Parsees, and Caffres. Among these, Mr. Medhurst, who had previously assisted Dr. Milne at

Malacca, established a school in a Chinese temple, and distributed a great number of tracts. Since then, other schools have been opened by other missionaries, and the station promises to be of great utility in future operations among the Chinese. The education of the young and rising Chinese population, both male and female, has recently assumed a promising appearance. A printing-press has also been established at this station, and books, both in the Malay and Chinese language, have been issued from thence in great numbers.

In 1819, Mr. Milton removed from Malacca to Singapore, and a temporary building was erected, which served as a residence, a school-house, and a chapel; and the usual means were employed for the benefit of the population, which consists of Chinese, Malays, Javanese, etc. Since then a printing-office has been established at Singapore, and this office, together with those at Malacca and Pulo Penang, have furnished an immense number of copies of the Scriptures and tracts, in Chinese and Malay, which have been widely dispersed; those in the former language extending even to the vicinity of Pekin. On the subject of the distribution of books and tracts at Singapore, one of the missionaries remarks:—“Perhaps not less than one hundred junks, of various sizes, pay at least an annual visit to Singapore, which affords abundant facilities for sending the sacred Scriptures into the empire of China, and to almost every important Chinese colony in the Indian Archipelago. The large junks from China are chiefly from two places, Canton and Amoy. They arrive early in the

year, and, as they stay some months, we have an opportunity of paying them several visits, and of holding conversations with the people. All the readers on board each junk are supplied with books, and then a small 'export cargo' is intrusted to the captain, or other intelligent and well-disposed person among the crew, to be given to their friends on returning home. A complete copy of the Scriptures is usually given to the captain for his own use. In all our intercourse with these visitors, as well as those from other parts, we have uniformly met with a friendly, and even kind reception; and the books are generally received with cheerfulness, and not unfrequently with strong feelings of gratitude."

Malacca, Pulo Penang, and Singapore, have been for years so many outposts for Christian missionaries, carrying on their warfare against the Great Dragon in China. In China itself, since the death of Dr. Morrison, little has been done. Leang Afa is still labouring in his Master's cause, in the midst of much persecution; and many excellent men have been sent to China by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, and the American Baptist Board, some of whom reside at Canton, where they have established a printing-press, which has been actively employed for the best interests of the Chinese. But English missionaries have not yet been permitted to reside permanently in that pagan country. Apart from the jealousy of the Chinese government towards our countrymen, the commercial squabbles fostered by the Portuguese, and the recent rupture between the

two countries, have prevented such a desirable consummation. The war having ceased, it is hoped English missionaries will, ere long, be permitted to go forth, and spread the glad tidings of salvation among that benighted people. Christians are anxiously watching the progress of events, and daily prayer is offered, that the way may be opened for the heralds of salvation to pass onward in their hallowed mission. Already the ports of Canton, Amoy, Fouchoufoo, Ningpo, and Shanghai, are thrown open to British merchants, and the island of Hong-kong is ceded in perpetuity to her Britannic Majesty, her heirs and successors. The British flag is permitted to wave in these several ports of the "celestial empire;" and it becomes Christians to unfold the standard of the Cross likewise. By treaty, peace and friendship are secured between the two empires; and it is hoped that England will be permitted to send forth her missionaries to promulgate the gospel of peace to that long-enslaved people, who have been groaning under the yoke of Satan from the earliest period of the world's history.

Advances have, indeed, already been made, and new posts occupied in that empire of darkness. Two missionaries have lately been sent forth by the Church Missionary Society, and some are already located at Hong-kong, and in the city of Shanghai. This city is a most important station, for it contains a population of about 300,000 souls, and being a place of great trade, is visited by about 4000 junks annually, from Manilla, Siam, and Singapore. Mr. Medhurst writes concerning this mission:—"The Chinese

authorities have not taken the slightest notice of us, nor objected to our living in the city. The British Consul is very kind, and throws no obstacle in our way. As far as we can now see, there will be no difficulty in effecting a residence here, and conducting our operations as far as our strength and opportunities extend." At Hong-kong, the committee of the London Missionary Society have resolved to establish the Anglo-Chinese college, which has been so many years in operation at Malacca, and of converting it into a theological seminary for the purpose of training a native ministry for China. Three native preachers have already commenced preaching the word of life at that station, and they are encouraged in their work not only by the attendance, but by the inquiries respecting the doctrines of Christianity, excited by their labours. In this settlement, likewise, as at Shanghai, the missionaries enjoy perfect toleration, and thus favoured they carry on an unrestricted intercourse with all classes of society. As the population increases, it is anticipated that there will be wide and effectual openings for evangelical efforts, both in the island and its vicinity. A spirit of inquiry has, moreover, been excited at Penang. Concerning this station, after visiting Hong-kong, to attend a general meeting of the missionaries, Mr. Stronach remarks:—"Since my return, I find that the Chinese here receive me with increased friendliness of feeling, and listen to what I say with more lively attention than ever. Here they congregate without alarm or disturbance, and listen often with eagerness and deep interest to the preaching of the gospel.

Many have avowed their conviction that it is the truth of Heaven which I declare, and that they feel, that I wish their true welfare when I exhort them to repent and believe in Jesus. Some of them think seriously on what they hear and read of the manifestations of Divine holiness and mercy." Thus a door seems to be set wide open, that missionaries may enter into that vast and populous empire, China,

"To proclaim liberty to the captives,
And the opening of the prison to them that are bound,
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."—ISA. lx. 1, 2.

An attack has been made on the gigantic idolatry of that country, and we are encouraged by prophecy to look forward with hope to the period when its images shall fall, maimed as Dagon was at the foot of the ark, before the ever-blessed gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

It has already been seen, that the Scriptures and tracts have been sent into China, through the medium of the printing-presses established at Malacca, Pulo Penang, and Singapore, and that the missionaries have been enabled thus to dispense the word of life, through the aid afforded them by the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the Religious Tract Society. Dr. Milne, in his "Retrospect of the first Ten Years of the Chinese Mission," after having acknowledged certain grants of 1000*l.*, from the British and Foreign Bible Society, for printing the Scriptures in Chinese, thus proceeds:—"In consequence of an application to the Religious Tract Society, a sum of 300*l.* was voted, for the purpose of assisting the Chinese mission in printing

and circulating religious tracts in the Chinese language. A second grant of 400*l.* was subsequently received from the same society, and for the same purposes. Great are our obligations to that institution, and great is the necessity that exists in these pagan lands, for the exercise of its beneficence. Tracts are soon read through, and easily carried about with one. Several hundreds of different sorts, and on different subjects, may with facility be packed up in a very small compass. They admit of a greater familiarity of diction, and a more diffuse style, than is befitting the sublimity of the sacred oracles themselves. They may be circulated more widely than the sacred Scriptures can. If we calculate either the price, or the persons capable of deriving profit from the religious books among the Chinese, we shall find, that fifty tracts may be given away for one New Testament. Thus fifty persons may be made acquainted with at least one important truth, for the expense of one Testament. A missionary, in his itinerant labours among the heathen, can carry a hundred tracts in his hand; and he will ever find great satisfaction, in leaving an appropriate one in the house where he has been visiting, or by putting one into the hands of those with whom he has been conversing; or by dropping one in the highway, where it is likely to be taken up by some passing stranger; or by reading and explaining one to those who are inclined to hear. A tract may be enclosed in a letter, and sent into a persecuting country without much risk of discovery.

“These things show the high importance of

the Tract Society, and how powerful an auxiliary it may become in the conversion of the heathen to Christ. Indeed, it holds the third rank, in point of utility, among those societies which constitute the glory of Christendom. Missionaries must ever be entitled to the first place, at least in as far as the heathen are concerned; inasmuch as without them, translations of the Scriptures are not likely to be extensively made, nor tracts written. Next in order comes the Bible Society, that mighty agent of Divine Providence, for uniting the energies of the Christian public, and to which almost every Protestant mission in the known world is indebted. The Tract Society is the last of this sacred triad; and though, in some respects, it holds a lower place than the other two, in others, its utility is more immediate, extensive, and apparent, than that of theirs.

“Nothing is farther from the writer’s mind than a wish to excite a dishonourable rivalry among those noble institutions, which will, doubtless, by their united efforts, in the course of time, make true religion to surround the globe on which we dwell, and extend the boundaries of the Christian church as widely as the habitations of men. But it is right that each institution should have its due honour; and we ought to know in what particular each excels, and how they all unite to promote the great cause of truth and righteousness in the earth. May Heaven continue to smile on them all, and may the joy of the Holy Ghost dwell abundantly in the hearts of those who direct their concerns!”

The grants of the Religious Tract Society

have not been confined to the first ten years of the Mission in China: its reports show that every year the cause of the Chinese has been remembered. Even when the forces of China and England were opposed to each other in the unequal contest, grants of money were made, and books sent to the different missionary stations in the Chinese Archipelago, for the benefit of that idolatrous people. Now the thunders of war have ceased, and peace is established between the two empires, the Society is endeavouring to enlarge its operations in that vast field of missionary enterprise; a special fund has been opened for China, and the amount received to February, 1845, was about £2500, and additional contributions are expected.

The contributions received have enabled the Society to make grants of books and tracts to all the stations occupied by the missionaries, and to afford effectual assistance in the printing of books at Hong-kong, whither the blocks and printing apparatus have been removed from Malacca. The opportunities for distributing tracts are numerous, and are eagerly embraced by the missionaries. Thus the American missionaries at Hong-kong write:—"A few huts on shore, and fifty or sixty salt-junks, and smaller boats in the harbour, have been visited for the purpose of religious instruction and the distribution of tracts. In two or three instances, a fleet of fifteen or twenty junks, passing on their way from Canton to Tiéchiú, have called here for a day, and afforded an opportunity for visiting the men in their junks, and taking them to the Mission-house, and thus the first ideas of Christianity have been commu-

nicated to many. Our chapel-room is up-stairs, and an open terrace in the rear, and containing the necessary tables, chairs, and seats. The lower story is occupied by our Chinese teacher and block-cutter, both professors of Christianity. The doors are open during the whole of every day, and every applicant is readily supplied with books and instruction. We find it a great convenience to have this lower room, which answers a great many valuable purposes, for teacher, books, paper, printing-blocks, types; and it now contains about 30,000 Christian tracts. The chapel is open every day; a table with Chinese tracts, and chairs are arranged in the vestibule, which is delightfully cool and pleasant; and the native assistant, who lives in one of the vestry-rooms, is always ready to preach, to give away tracts, and to refer special cases to the missionary." Tracts are eagerly received by the Chinese, and it is incumbent upon the community of Christian England to see that they are well supplied; for, as one of the missionaries observes, "Books have a great part to act in the regeneration ~~of this~~ people;" and to this end, books, as well as tracts, are preparing for sale and gratuitous distribution.

The Chinese are a reading people, and they all speak the same language and write the same characters. In other pagan countries it has been necessary to establish schools in order to teach the infant and the adult to read; but in China the people generally can read and write. Moreover, they are extremely inquisitive, patient in research, and fond of literature. Every thing

they meet with in the shape of a book or tract is read with avidity; and had their own literature been capable of improving the moral character of man, the Chinese would, doubtless, have long ago presented a lovely picture of society: but how awfully deficient that is to teach right moral conduct and the way of salvation, has been shown in the chapter on the language and literature. All their writers, even the most enlightened, may be considered as "the blind leading the blind." The thick films of pagan darkness had been gathered for ages over the universal mind in China, and reason was too impotent to chase its shades away. Confucius, Mencius, and a long list of philosophers, struggled to emerge from the night of darkness in which they found themselves, but in vain.

Here, then, is a wide field for the exercise of Christian philanthropy—a field already prepared for the scattering abroad of the good seed of the word of life; for, although the missionary may not yet be permitted to labour therein, there are facilities, as before shown, for sending books and tracts even into the interior of that exclusive empire; and these facilities are greatly increased by the recent peace between the two empires. In addition to the missionary stations in the Chinese Archipelago, they may now be sent to the five ports open to the British merchants, and the island ceded to her Britannic Majesty, and, through these mediums, into all parts of China; and they may be sent in the perfect confidence that they will be read. The minds of the Chinese thirst for knowledge, and they

will gather it even from the handbill posted on the walls.

On the reception of the word of God among the Chinese, Mr. Lay, a former agent of the Bible Society, remarks:—"Among the workmen and their acquaintances at a tailor's shop, I witnessed some of the best examples of an interest in the Holy Scriptures that I met with during my stay. I was asked for them again and again, with a cordiality of feeling that was truly refreshing. An interest in this kind of reading had been diffused from friend to friend, till, instead of single copies, they began to ask for numbers, accompanying their requests with the remark, that *ho too tung yun tuk shu*, 'a great many now read the books.' One of the friends came and took a bundle away to supply some kinsmen at a distance, and thus to perform, in its first elements, the work of a native distributor. The man who introduced this person to me said, 'The ladies' within read the books; they say they are good books, they understand them. Is not this good?' added he, with an air of triumph. 'Yes,' replied I, 'ten times told,' or good in the superlative. For, while I had heard some complain that they did not know what to make of their sense, among the males, it was in the highest degree gratifying to hear that females in China were reading the Scriptures with understanding. It was a little fact, when taken by itself; but it gave me the most unfeigned pleasure, because it was unsought for and unexpected, and seemed like a symptom of something that may, in its development, fill the Christian and philanthropist

with wonder and delight. The amount of successful labours that females have contributed to the advancement of Bible, missionary, and other causes, in this country, is truly astonishing; and, in the face of all that has been said about the degraded state of females, I will take a hint from this very little circumstance, and venture to predict, that they will be the first to welcome the gospel, and to set it fairly agoing in China."

The same writer, in common with the English and American missionaries, urges the necessity of distributing tracts in large numbers among the Chinese. And in the present state of the feelings of the Chinese towards "barbarians," it may fairly be presumed that they will be the means of doing more good than even the missionaries themselves. Against the white man they have strong national antipathies, and these have been increased by his unprincipled ambition and commercial rapacity. But against books and tracts no such antipathy exists—they are allowed to speak to the heart. Besides, few are yet capable of teaching the Chinese in their own language, and years of toil must be endured before missionaries can go forth in numbers. They have yet to prepare for this mighty labour; but the press can speak without reserve, and in a language that can be understood. It can tell the hundreds of millions inhabiting that vast empire the way of salvation in their own tongue, wherein they were born.

"There is something grand," says Gutzlaff, "in seeing such a prodigious number of our species united in one nation, speaking the same

language, and using the same characters in expressing their thoughts by writing. Ancient and modern history furnishes no parallel of an identity which may be traced in the slightest particular." There is "something grand" in this circumstance; but how indescribably grand would be the picture, if this "prodigious number of our species" united in the worship of the one true God, instead of bowing the knee to their many false gods, or grovelling in the night of atheism! How indescribably grand would be a well-founded idea, that these hundreds of millions were passing to the realms of glory, to swell this triumph of the Redeemer's name:—"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing!" And that earth will one day witness such a scene, the sure word of prophecy testifies. Rapt in holy vision, in which futurity was revealed unto him, the same "beloved John," who was privileged to hear this song of the redeemed in heaven, writes, "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, ~~and under~~ the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever," Rev. v. 12, 13. Christian reader, you are privileged to aid in bringing about this glorious consummation; and a talent has been committed unto you for that purpose, by Him who "hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." See that you use that talent, that, through his grace,

you may receive the welcome—"Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," Matt. xxv. 23. Beware of entertaining the idea that the little you can do will be of no avail, and that, therefore, your exertions may be dispensed with. All true Christians are commanded to spread the gospel throughout the world; and if they were to unite in the hallowed work with all their hearts, how great and delightful would be the results! If you, reader, "have tasted that the Lord is gracious"—if you are powerfully constrained by the love of Christ, who died on the cross for your salvation, you will rejoice in spreading abroad the tidings of his love. You will be ready to make any sacrifices, and to exert yourself to lead sinners to Christ. The gold and the silver which a kind Providence has poured into your coffers, will be looked upon as a talent committed to your trust for the service of the Lord, as being bestowed upon you for the purpose of assisting to build up the spiritual temple of which ~~you~~ ^{your Redeemer} is the "chief corner-stone." Whenever you are called upon to join in this work, you will imitate the zeal of the servants of David, who, when he exhorted them to assist in building a temple for the Lord at Jerusalem, "offered willingly." Have you, then, an interest in the atoning blood of Christ? Are you living to Him who died for you? If so, how great is your responsibility! By his grace you are become an heir of immortal glory. And enjoying this delightful prospect,

you are bound to stretch forth your hand to the aid of the perishing. They are going down to the grave "without hope, and without God in the world," not only by hundreds and by thousands, but by tens of thousands—nay, millions! Can you, then, refuse to impart the blessing unto others? The servant who hid his talent in a napkin until the return of his lord, was cast into "outer darkness," where there was "weeping and gnashing of teeth." You are therefore called upon to be active in the promulgation of the word of life. Spread it, then; that the long-predicted scene may be realized, when all shall know the Lord from the rising to the setting sun—when the whole human race shall flock to the temples of the one true God, as "doves to the windows."

"O scenes surpassing fable, and yet true;
Scenes of accomplish'd bliss! which who can see,
Though not in distant prospect, and not feel
His soul refresh'd with foretaste of the joy?

One song employs all nations; and all cry
'Worthy the Lamb, for he was slain for us!'
~~And the hills in the vales and on the rocks~~
Shout to each other, and the mountain tops
From distant mountains catch the flying joy:
Till nation after nation taught the strain,
Earth rolls the rapturous hosanna round.
Behold the measure of the promise fill'd!
See Salem built, the labour of a God!
Bright as a sun the sacred city shines;
All kingdoms and all princes of the earth
Flock to that light; the glory of all lands
Flows into her; unbounded is her joy,
And endless her increase. Thy rams are there,
Nebaioth, and the flocks of Kedar there:
The looms of Ormus, and the mines of Ind,
And Saba's spicy groves, pay tribute there.

Praise is in all her gates upon her walls,
And in her streets, and in her spacious courts,
Is heard salvation Eastern Java there
Kneels with the natives of the farthest west,
And Ethiopia spreads abroad the hand,
And worships Her report has travell'd forth
Into all lands. From every clime they come
To see thy beauty, and to share thy joy,
O Sion! in assembly such as earth
Saw never, such as Heaven stoops down to see "

COWPER.



